

INDIAN CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

WHAT IS MAN?



JESUDOSS

GURUKUL MADRAS

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Indian Culture and Civilization

WHAT IS NEW ?



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Indian Christian Anthropology

WHAT IS MAN ?

*Theological Attempts and Directions towards the Formation
of an Indian Christian Anthropology for Today*

D. W. JESUDOSS

**Research Institute,
Gurukul, Madras.**

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DEDICATED
TO MY
PARENTS

COVER PICTURE DESCRIPTION

i) The front cover has a picture of a man - Thiruvalluvar. His picture is chosen because he propounded the principles of harmonious life. The Author refers to this Tamil saint in his thesis (cf. pp. 219, 223)

ii) Apart from this, the picture stands for any man or yogi. The author explains man as having three gunas or characters viz. belief, service and wisdom. In other words man who knows himself believes in God, serves his neighbour and can discriminate. (cf. pp. 146-208)

iii) But finally the author concludes that man should not act in parts but reach the final stage of love. (cf. pp. 209ff) In order to reach this stage, the Cross of Christ helps him. Man can know who he is only before the Cross.

iv) So the cross lines not only show man's main characteristic divisions, but they point to the Cross of Christ which depicts the culminating quality of man i.e. love.

Author,

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FOREWORD

Today the book market is flooded with many kinds of books. Generally speaking, books on the section - Religion or Theology are few, especially on Christian Theology. Even the few books on Christian Theology are mostly by foreign authors. This book on "Indian Christian Anthropology" fortunately is a genuine attempt to fill the gap.

Further the concept of man has got only little attention from Indians belonging to several religions; the reason may be, the concept is all-embracing; it is a comprehensive theme.

The author of this book brings out a Bird's eye view of the Christian (theological) concept of man; the interesting feature of this book is that the author depicts the nature of man from an Indian perspective. I hope that this book will be welcomed in the west also. In fact, this book is the product of a doctoral work done by the author in one of the West German Universities.

The author explicates the nature of man specially in the Gita structure, viz. using the concepts of Bhakti, Karma and Gnana. His way of explaining the nature of man as yogi who brings within himself all the three characters by bhakti, karma and gnana culminating in the Christian concept of love is really interesting and needs further study also.

I am happy that this book comes out as a product of the Research Department wing of the Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute.

The author, D. W. Jesudoss, is the Research Director of the Gurukul Theological College, which position he occupies with great distinction. He was a professor at the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary for quite some time after he finished his doctoral studies at Erlangen University in West Germany. He is a scholar

in his own right and he is attempting to study and interpret Asian Christian thinking as a subject of research at Gurukul, and in this endeavour it is right he starts with Indian Christian thought.

At Gurukul, it is hoped that under his leadership the Christian thought in the context of Asian cultures will be brought to focus particularly amongst the seminary students who should find the relevance of their faith both to the social and cultural setting of India and Asia. I am, therefore, happy that Dr. Jesudoss has begun with this excellent piece of work published by the Research Department of Gurukul Theological College and Research Institute.

Dr. K. Rajaratnam

Executive Secretary

*United Evangelical Lutheran Churches
in India*

Madras,
3-4-1986

FOREWORD

"Indian Christian Anthropology" is a subject which has not yet been sufficiently handled by Indian Theologians and, I am glad, Dr. D. W. Jesudoss, a close friend and former colleague of mine, has taken it as a subject for his doctoral research and has successfully handled it. It is interesting that he approaches the subject from an Indian perspective starting with a review on the thinking of seven eminent Indian Christian Theologians on this subject.

In the Indian conceptual setting he identifies four types of anthropology - understanding human as Yogi, Bhaktha Yogi, Karma Yogi and Jnana Yogi - and shows Christian anthropology as different from all these, understanding human as "*anban*" as human in love. Men and Women in Christ do everything in love, whether they accept or reject, construct or destroy, embrace or confront. This is indeed something unique in the Christian understanding of human. I am sure, this work will challenge the readers, and provoke them for further thinking and research in this field.

I congratulate the author Dr. D. W. Jesudoss, his creative work and wish this publication all success.

Madurai,
February, 1986

Dr. Gnana Robinson
President,
Senate of Serampore College.

FOREWORD

If it is true that anthropology is the key to theology, that the mystery of man reveals the mystery of God, the subject of this book would be a daring adventure indeed, but a vain enterprise.

However, the Christian theologian who wrote this treatise takes the opposite stance; theology is the key to anthropology. In other words nobody does know what man really is and ought to be, unless he has known God.

"God created man in His own image" (Gen 1:27). No Image can fully show the real thing. But the real thing will make an image take shape.

Various images are possible having the clear reflection of the reality in common but varying in astonishing detail, thus opening up a theological approach to ethnic and national anthropology.

Through the great venture towards an Indian Christian Anthropology on the basis of the biblical revelation of God by my friend and colleague (and former student) Dr. William Jesudoss, may the leader find new insights and stimulation for deepening his understanding of the mystery of ourselves.

H. Grate

Asia Secretary,

*Evangelical Lutheran Mission in
Lower Saxony, W. Germany.*

Hildesheim,
February, 1986

PREFACE

The writing of a dissertation is usually compared to a delivery and likewise it needs the help of many. Therefore I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to those who have helped me in this process.

Though I had an interest in the study of theological anthropology, it is Professor N. P. Moritzen, my 'Doktorvater', who guided me all through my way of research. The work began already in 1975 in Madurai, where I met him for the first time. I was also fortunate to get valuable advice and suggestions from Professors. R. Slenczka, Chr. Frey and J. Track, whose field is systematic theology.

The time I had spent in Germany is a turning point in my life; it has given maturity to my thinking, *in general*. I would like to mention my German teachers in India who took a lot of interest in seeing me through this heavy work, namely Dr. H. Grafe Dr. Frenz and Dr. Hoerschelmann. I thank them for all their help.

A word of thanks must be made to those who took personal interest in me, encouraging me to finish the work and comforting me in times of trouble and loneliness, namely, Pastorin R. Kosmala, the Henzlers, the Renzes and the Frenzes. During the time I lived in Germany as a 'Strohwitwer' (Married Bachelor), Martin Luther Bund was my home and its residents my family. I hope to have picked up life-long friendship here.

My sincere thanks are due to the Librarians who helped me to get access to the needed sources for my study:

the Erlangen-Nuernberg University Library,
the U. T College Library, Bangalore,
the T. T. S. Library, Madurai, and
the Missionsakademie. Hamburg.

My hearty thanks are due to Frau Justl who Willingly and patiently bore with me, in reading my handwriting and typing the manuscript. Last but not the least is my family, specially my wife, who were willing to live a separated life for a little over three years.

I must express my hearty thanks to the Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Lower Saxony and Pastorin Ruth Kosmala of Gifhorn who graciously came forward to subsidise the printing cost of the book.

I am not publishing this book because it is free from any criticism. But I do it just in order to receive some constructive suggestions. So any book review or personal letter will be of great help to me in this regard. My main concern is not the anthropology of others but the last chapter in which I have tried to propound an Indian Lutheran view of anthropology from a systematic theological angle. I shall be very happy and thankful if I can get constructive criticism on my anthropology i.e. on Chapter VIII.

We have a lot of systematic work from the West but very little has been done from the Indian background - a soil which is most fertile spiritually; hence my attempt, to fill the gap.

I am extremely thankful to the great leaders who have graciously written Foreword to my dissertation viz., Dr. K. Rajaratnam Dr. Gnana Robinson and Dr. H. Grafe. Dr. M. M. Thomas himself has written a personal letter to me after going through the Chapter VII which I wrote on his concept of Man and finally says that I have been 'fair' to him in general. I thank him for his remarks.

Proof-reading is definitely an onerous job. My thanks are due to Mrs Alice K. Jose for having read the proof. Many thanks are due to the Vijay Grafix Printers who came at the right time to print my Thesis.

I am happy that this book is published under the auspices of the Research Institute of the Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Madras.

Mistakes in this book belong to me; credits and new ideas, if any, go to my students - past and present, teachers, guides, friends and relatives who have shaped my life and character.

If I begin to write about them also, we may not come to the matter at all. I thank them all in my heart. I have, however, not forgotten to be grateful to my God who is the author and finisher of all good works.

Soli

Deo

Gloria

Madras.
Lent, 1986.

D. W. Jesudoss.

INTRODUCTION

It is high time that India recognises the value of a study of anthropology. Of course one did not like to deal with the concept of man because the worth of man ranges from extreme heights to extreme depths in India; the caste system has only established this unbridgeable gap. But now that India has become the 'biggest democratic country in the world, the study of anthropology is of paramount value to Indians.

The reflection of this present situation in India is to be seen in the writings of the Indian christian theologians too. Since anthropology gets the least attention in the Indian situation, it is not suprising that Christian theologians also gave little value to it. Devanandan is quite right in saying that anthropology must get more attention in the Indian background. Therefore, he advocated 'a new anthropology' which looks at man in the sight of God i.e. theocentric anthropology.¹ The Indian Christian theologians, generally, write their views on mission, church, indigenisation, society, ethics etc. Of course, one has to express his view of man while writing on the above mentioned themes. But this does not mean that their real concern is the concept of man. Man is no longer the subject but the object or subsidiary clause in their theological grammar, e.g. when one talks about society, he may say: society is composed of individual men; however, here, the concept of man gets neither continuity with the following ideas nor does it get the prime importance. It may be pointed out here that in dealing with Chenchiah, Chakkarai and Appasamy, Wagner devotes only a few pages on their views on man.² And in dealing with Devanandan, Wietzke does not allot even one paragraph heading to anthropology. But Wietzke writes on Devanandan's views on maya (pp.19-23), the relationship of ecclesiastical and political fellowship (pp. 36-39), modern Hinduism (pp. 59-72), on church and mission (pp. 74-84), Gita as connecting link in dialogue between Christians and Hindus (pp. 124-127), Neo-Hinduism (pp. 134-138), views of Indian christians on political and socio-economic change (pp. 144-163), indigenous theology (pp.

185-200) etc. Finally Wietzke concludes that Devanandan's contributions lie mainly in four fields viz. Religions, Society, Indigenisation and Ecumenical theology. And he is right.³ O. V. Jathanna, while dealing with Kraemer, Hogg, Hocking and Chenchiah, allots subdivisions on the concept of man only in Kraemer (pp. 86-91) and Hogg (pp. 176-185) but does not allot a subsection on the concept of man either in Chenchiah or in Hocking.⁴

It must, however, be mentioned that Devanandan had begun to realise the importance of anthropological studies in the Indian Christian theology; and M. M. Thomas has contributed his mite on this theme. Such a situation in the field of Indian Christian theology has led the author to take up a study of anthropology in the Indian background.

Another major factor which may be confronted in this study is the difficulty to set the Christian anthropology at the background of Indian anthropology; it has been realised that the two have two different structures.⁵ It is interesting to note how the Indian Christian theologians have built their anthropology on the Indian concept of man.

The seven Indian Christian theologians chosen for this study represent the pre-independent and post-independent tendencies in India i.e. from ca.1925 to 1980. The seven are only a selection. There are other theologians also namely M. C. Parekh, S. S. Singh, S. J. Samartha, S. Amirtham etc. Roman Catholic theologians like R. Panikkar, Bede Griffiths and D. S. Amalorpavadass also have contributed to the development of Indian Christian theology.⁶ Moreover, the contribution of western scholars like Farquhar, Hogg, Boyd, Klostermeier and Abhishiktananda to the development of Indian Christian theology is praise-worthy. The first seven chapters of this dissertation deal with the seven Indian theologians chosen for this study with an evaluation by the author at the end of each chapter. The eighth chapter explains the author's own anthropology.

Though the worth of man is a highly controversial factor in India, the study of anthropology is very important in India. With the ever increasing population and the government's all-out effort to curb the birth rate of children, one wonders about the value of a child

and the worth of a human being in India. The dignity of man vanishes behind the oppression of man by man. But God is still interested in man; 'He gave his only begotten son' in order that man may not die but that he may have life and that too abundant life (Jn. 3:16; 10:10). This means that a study of man becomes as important as a study of God. In fact, what is desired is not to set anthropology over against theology but to understand anthropology in the light of theology. This becomes all the more important in this secular age and also in a Christian's relationship with his non-Christian neighbours, as in India. Bultmann was quite right when he wrote :

*Every assertion about God is simultaneously an assertion about man and vice versa. For this reason and in this sense Paul's theology is, at the same time, anthropology.*⁷

The methodology of this dissertation also must be stated. There are different methods of writing a research work. Usually, in dealing with an Indian Christian theologian, one makes a detailed study of the theology of one such person; e.g. C. L. Furtado on D. T. Niles, J. Wietzke on P. D. Devanandan and S. Sumithra on M. M. Thomas. H. Wagner has made his dissertation on the theology of Appasamy, Chenchiah and Chakkarai. But the method followed in this dissertation is a different one; only one aspect of their writings namely anthropology has been taken up and seven theologians' views are dealt with. Since there is no work on Indian Christian anthropology at the present and since the seven theologians themselves (except M. M. Thomas) have written their views on anthropology under different themes, the present work does not aim at a depth-level research but a wide survey of facts on Indian anthropology; it aims more at a comprehensive views of several theologians than a particular theologian's ideas. Though the work has the disadvantages of working systematically, it gives the possibility to look at the concept of man from very different angles, as the seven theologians do, and specially their different ways of treating mission, church, indigenisation etc. Since many persons-both Indian and European-have dealt with the seven Indian theologians, whose names and works are given in the bibliography, it has not been possible to make a critical analysis of their evaluations also. Thus concentration has been given to the works of the seven theologians' writings and not to their evaluators.

The seven Indian theologians are dealt with in this study in the order of priority in which their writings have appeared. Appasamy has brought forth his ideas before Chenchiah or Chakkarai. Devanandan occupies the centre i.e. his writings mark the turning point in the development of Indian Christian anthropology. Though M. M. Thomas has begun writing before Chandran, he is dealt with at the end because he is the one who throws much light on the concept of man among the Indian Christian theologians; this seventh chapter leads to the author's own views on anthropology in the Indian context today.



CHAPTER I

APPASAMY'S ANTHROPOLOGY: MORAL UNION

Life and Work

Aiyadurai Jesudasan Appasamy was born on 3rd September 1891. His father Devan Behadur A. S. Appasamy became a Christian when he was 24 years old. Tracing Appasamy's ancestry Wagner says that he belongs to a high caste in Tamil land and followed saivite tradition.¹ Though Appasamy belonged to a comparatively rich family in Tamilnadu, his educational career was retarded because of his ill-health (Malaria attack); so instead of completing B. A. in four years he had to take seven years.

From his autobiography, it is obvious, that Appasamy had been an admirer of his father and thus his spiritual life was shaped by his father to a great extent.² Having done his school education in Tinnevely District, Appasamy moved to Madras for his college education. His theological education was mostly done in the U.S.A. and in England, where he came under the influence of Von Hugel. Appasamy spent one semester in the University of Marburg. Though it was comparatively a short stay, he had picked up life long guidance and friendship with famous Professors like Friedrich Heiler and Rudolf Otto.³

Appasamy took his title of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Oxford after submitting his dissertation on "The Mysticism of the Fourth Gospel in its relation to Hindu Bhakti Literature". The theme for his dissertation must have sprung out of his real interest and deep dwelling in the Bhakti movement and this research had, later, formed the main basis of his teachings and writings. After completing his studies, Appasamy took to literacy work with the Christian Literature Society in India, during which time, two of his famous books 'Christianity as Bhakti Marga' (1928) and 'What is Moksha?' (1931) have appeared. His book on 'Temple Bells'

which is anthology of Hindu Bhakti literature also appeared in 1930. In 1932 because of lack of funds for the literary work, Appasamy took to teaching in Bishop's College, Calcutta. He was teaching Philosophy of Religion and History of Religions till 1936, when, due to health reasons he had to resign the post. For the next ten years, he was engaged in various works such as helping his father in the up-keep of a church and a school in Rajaputhukudi, doing social service, making researches and in writing. In 1942 appeared his book "The Gospel and India's Heritage" which is a good summary of his views in a systematic presentation. In 1946, he became the Archdeacon of the church in Palayamcottai and in 1950 he was chosen as the Bishop of Coimbatore Diocese of the Church of South India (C.S.I.), in which post he continued till his retirement in 1959. Then Bishop Appasamy moved to Vellore to live in his daughter's home till 1975 when he passed away.⁴

Bishop Appasamy was a calm and quiet man who was deeply interested in the uplift of the people and their spiritual growth. He was strongly convinced that Advaita philosophy of Hinduism cannot help the ordinary man in his spiritual growth. On the other hand, he was strong in accepting Bhaktimarga as the right way of expressing man's deep spiritual intentions. He also felt that Advaita may be Indian, but never Christian and that only Bhakti marga can be integrated with the Christian religious structure. Advaita, according to him, failed at the important point of distinguishing God from man.⁵

Appasamy was a man of deep piety in his own personal life. He valued prayer and Bible reading very much; meditation was a joy to him. He had a special interest in living in Ashrams. His desire to speak with great men - both Hindu and Christian (Rajaji, Radhakrishnan, S. Naidu, Azariah, Brunner, Saddhu Sunder Singh etc.) is discernible.⁶ He has encouraged during his term of office as Bishop, many revival preachers and leaders like Paul Kadambavanam and N. Daniel.⁷

Bishop Appasamy did not hesitate to believe in miraculous spiritual healings and defends it by pointing out that in India, where many people have no access to doctors and medicines due to poverty, the spiritual healing is to be welltaken. He

also cites the example of Bishop Pakenhalm Walsch who used to pray daily for several people for healing. Often being afflicted by weakness, Appasamy could have come to a lasting faith in divine healing.⁸

*When we started in 1951 to pray for a spiritual awakening in the diocese, we did not know at all how God would answer the prayer. But now we realise that Divine Healing was certainly one of the many channels through which He sent His blessings to us.*⁹

Not only divine healings but sudden conversions were witnessed by Appasamy. Through the work of evangelistic preachers, many hard-hearted and troublesome people gave up their wicked ways and turned to a new life of evangelism.¹⁰ His narration of the conversion of Ramachander depicts that 'love is more potent than fear'.¹¹

Bishop Appasamy was equally interested in presenting the Christian Gospel to the Hindu in his setting. As he claims that 'nearly half the total population of India' follow Bhakti cults, he attempted to present Christianity as a Bhakti religion with its ingredients of mystical elements.¹² Appasamy appreciated music in evangelisation which is a salient feature in Bhakti movements; his explanation of Villupattu (Bow-song) bears witness to his interest in giving importance to music in the religious field.¹³

His love for nature is clearly seen in his annual visit to Kodaikanal where he walked long distances enjoying the beauties of creation. Thus Appasamy was a man of many and different interests but they all were channelled through his piety. He was not shy of revealing his deep pietism and even occasional ecstasies:

*"In 1911 I attended a College Students camp. There the Holy Spirit spoke to me."*¹⁴

The following song that he chooses to describe the life and teachings of Paul Kadambavanam might even be appropriate for his own:

*He lives ! He lives ! Christ Jesus lives today
 He walks with me and talks with me
 Along life's narrow way.
 He lives ! He lives ! Salvation to impart
 You ask me how I know He lives
 He lives within my heart.¹⁵*

General Setting

Just as Devanandan centred his writings on Society and Chenchiah on Philosophical Yoga, Appasamy built his theology on Bhakti. God in Bhakti is the Sovereign, the King, the Father, the Lover and all that a Bhakti can imagine of Him. He is transcendent but simultaneously immanent. Christ by his Incarnation has helped man to understand the glimpses of the Invisible God. God cannot be known in His full majesty but His bhakta (disciple) can get to know the supremacy, love and bliss of God through his meditation. In the process of mystical relationship, man loses himself in God; he does not become God but is united with God. The main source of power to get involved in this act of mystical unity is given and operated by the Holy Spirit.¹⁶

Man is a creature, an unworthy living being, who through the grace of God has obtained the great possibility of meeting God. The confrontation invokes the feeling of guilt in man and he craves for forgiveness, new strength and spiritual joy. Songs serve as a medium of venting the feelings of a sinner to enjoy the beauty of God. Meditations and songs are the media of mystical union. The sinfulness of sin is very often revealed by bhaktas in their songs. The praise of God, the cry of the sinner are common features of bhakti songs and in meditation as well in prayer, the mystery of seeing 'three in one and one in three' is made an object of wonder.¹⁷

However, in bhakti cult, the concept of corporate worship gets only a secondary role rather than mystical union. The singing of bhajans (chorus songs) and participation in Kalakshebam are typically bhakti traits. The recitation of the life of the avatars like Rama and Krishna is quite common in temples and elsewhere. Along with this, there

follow a great many festivals connected with the avatars. The well known epics-Ramayana and Mahabharatha provide material for Bhakti worship. Appasamy clearly points out that the bhakti tradition also does not emphasise the corporate worship.

The Hindu religion is deficient in this respect. It recognises fully God's dealings, with individuals; but it does not make clear God's presence in His believers, as a group of collectively.

God, according to Appasamy, is both personal and more than that.

So through Christ we sweep the the heavens and realize the inaccessible depths and distances with all their mystery, stretching to we know not where. Beyond Christ is the great and mysterious God, great and mysterious in His love and goodness as well as in His power and might. We may not measure or follow or comprehend Him fully.¹⁹

Appasamy also points out the lack in Hindu bhakti where the suffering aspect of God is undermined and discounted for the ananda (joy) of God. Even if the avatar suffers (for example-Rama) it is only transitory or is against the nature of God.²⁰ So the Hindu considers the suffering as alien property of God. However, Christian religion cannot accept this. Under the dominant idea of Karma, an Indian usually connects suffering with sin. Such a view of suffering is harmful in a community of believers, where the burden of one falls on the other. If at all Christianity can make a splendid contribution to the Indians, it lies in the fact that the sufferings of Jesus though acute, were not the results of his sin. A positive attitude to those who suffer is a necessary feature in the anthropology for India.²¹ While explaining the nature of Christ-His Divinity and Humantiy and the mode of their union, Appasamy rejects the Nicene or Chalcedonian attitude towards the understanding of the word 'homoousios'. Jesus' identity with God is not one of substance but moral or ethical union. Appasamy finds it easy to interpret Jesus' union with God in his bhakti-form. He, however together with Chenchiah, says that Christ was not

'identical with God but dependent on God'. He quotes John 14:28 to establish his view. So Christ's union is not *unio hypostatica* but *unio mystica*. In order to explain this mystical union, Appasamy makes a capital out of the verse: 'Abide in me'.²²

To Appasamy the same relationship that existed between Jesus and God is the kind of relationship that exists between Jesus and His believers; thus Christology decided anthropology. For Appasamy the relation between Christ and the Father shall not be divorced from that of his relation to the believer.²³

Appasamy also stresses the unity of Jesus with God as a unity of will; Jesus' will was in no way different from His Father's. Appasamy quotes the Gethsemane incident to prove this.²⁴

Appasamy's interest in indigenisation is clearly visible in his desire to accept the usage of the term 'Avatar'. This is probable because, unlike Brahmabhandav,^{24a} he followed bhakti line where the avatar plays a dominant role.²⁵ However, Appasamy wants to qualify the Christian use of the term through the following four ideas:

1. Christian Avatar is not a partial revelation of God.
2. Its purpose is not to destroy the wicked, but so save them.
3. There is only one Avatar.
4. Avatar is no appearance (docetic) as in Saivism but Jesus was a real man.²⁶

Appasamy's Anthropology

Appasamy considers man not only as an emotional being but also as a being with conscience, reason and a particular experience. However, following the bhakti tradition means that emotion plays a greater role in the religious life of a man (in comparison with Karma and Gnana Margas). In all the writings of Appasamy, the word Bhakti gets various kinds of nuances. Broadly speaking, it

acquires three wide-ranging meanings viz. love, faith and hope. Bhakti also stands for piety, a person who believes in God (bhakta) and faith-union. One also speaks of pseudo-bhakti which is deceptive.²⁷

It is difficult to trace the origins of Bhakti movement; it has three beginnings, namely, a mythical, a traditional and a historical stage. Historically it goes back to Ramanuja who expounded the Visistadvaita and runs forward through the great many people of Alvars, Nayanmars, Tilak, Chaitanya, Krishna Pillai etc. Traditionally it has begun already by the beginning of the Christian era, especially in and through the Bhagavad Gita. Mythically speaking, bhakti origins are traced back to the original inhabitants of India before the arrival of the Aryans.²⁸

Man can have different kinds of bhakti-emotional, ecstatic, moral etc. But, according to Appasamy the right type of bhakti is only a moral union with Christ. Bhakti cannot be isolated from implicit obedience to the moral standard of God.²⁹

Man is essentially a sinner. He is not divine, nor can he be identified with the deity, as in the advaita. However, his soul is to be in 'harmony.....with the Divine Soul in thought and imagination, in purpose and will, in humble deed and adoring devotion'.³⁰

Since man does not live up to the high moral standard which God expects of him, he must all the more try to be in closer fellowship with God. Appasamy feels that in Judaism and Christianity, the concept of sin is 'deepened into the conviction of sin' because these are 'highly ethical religions'. But in metaphysical religions like Hinduism the conviction of sin wanes into 'a feeling of ignorance or illusion'.³¹ Thus Appasamy brings out the danger of evaluating sin as something which could be easily remedied and not take the seriousness of it as separating or cutting the relationship of the bhakta from his God.

Though Appasamy connects karma with the concept of sin, salvation is not according to him, just a release from Karma-samsara but an essential faith-union with Christ. Atonement is made possible in the forgiveness of sin and this is made available for the bhakta through the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary.

*The sin of men has brought about the suffering and death of Jesus on the Cross. If God forgave without the Cross, He would be laying aside His own moral law which He has established among men. This He could not well do. If the moral law were thus abandoned, chaos only would prevail in the world. So the experience of the Cross is absolutely necessary. After the Cross no one can say that God forgives men because it is easy for Him or because He does not care to uphold the law that righteousness should prevail in the world.*⁸³

But according to the theory of Karma, there can be no vicarious suffering for all suffering is the effect of previous deeds.

Appasamy combines, like Sadhu Sundar Singh, both sacrificial theory and the Moral influence theory of the cross

*He who would live in Christ must follow Him altogether. And as his intensest moments were those spent on the Cross, the Christian must identify himself with the suffering Lord and even share in his agony. Only such entire and willing identity with Jesus lead to life eternal.*⁸⁴

Thus Appasamy identifies the Johannine concept of eternal life with the Hindu idea of Moksha. He contributes to the idea of realised eschatology, when he asserts that a bhakta (forgiven sinner, who is in faith-union with Christ) is already in Moksha, though he may still continue to live in this world. In every bhakta, God dwells as the Inner Spirit (Antaryamin). Nevertheless, there is ambiguity in Appasamy's description of 'antaryamin': whether Christ or Holy Spirit dwells in bhakta is unclear. His ideas about the 'indwelling Logos' and the 'indwelling' of the Holy Spirit (antaryamin) criss-cross with each other.⁸⁵

Appasamy's concept of man can be culled out of two of his views on authority and 'the presence of Christ'. He has written a book on the sources of authority: 'What shall we Believe? A study of Christian Pramanas'. In his book he describes man as one having a soul, conscience, reason and experience. The Christian Pramanas therefore are: the Scriptures (Sruti), the Church (Sabha), Reason (Yukti) and Experience (Anubhava). Appasamy takes it for granted

that every human being has a soul. Though soul is beyond scientific understanding, Appasamy wants, to say that religion is as valid as science; while science deals with the visible things of the world, religion is involved in intuiting the 'invisible' in the world. So just as experiments on objects are essential for the development of science, so intuition is essential to understand 'God, soul and immortality'.³⁶ In his idea of 'immortality', Appasamy comes very close to the Hindu idea of rebirth.³⁷ In order to appropriate intuition, Appasamy advocates meditation which he does so convincingly.³⁸

Appasamy thinks that every human being is endowed with 'a sense of obligation, which, he identifies, with conscience. He agrees that for some it may be clear and for others unclear'.³⁹

Balancing his bhakti leanings, it is encouraging to find that Appasamy accepts reason as the third source of authority. However, he does not want to exalt the value of reason. Though reason, according to Appasamy, is of great value and a gift from God to understand the things in this universe, yet it has no final saying; it can only be a part of the authority. Man can know God partly through reason, but it cannot help him, all by itself, to know God; for God is what human reason cannot comprehend also.⁴⁰

*.....Yukti pramana is not the only pramana. It has its limits and has to be supplemented by Anubhava pramana.*⁴¹

So the fourth pramana i.e. Anubhava. Appasamy, true to his Bhakti tradition, lays great value to this source of authority. Besides scriptures, church and reason, experience of a particular man gets a prominent place of authority. On matters of 'indifferent things' like cinema-going, family planning, on which the first 3 sources of authority have not laid a hard and fast rule, probably the experience of the individual is to be the decisive factor! Therefore Appasamy encourages the Bhakta to have direct experience with Jesus Christ; prayer is one of the best media for it.⁴² Giving more weight and importance to prayer, Appasamy quotes Sadhu Sundar Singh who said :

*If you want to know about Christ, read the Bible.
But if you want to know Christ, pray to Him.*⁴³

With regard to the view of scriptures, Appasamy holds only the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments as valid. Boyd commenting on Appasamy's stand on Hindu scriptures, says that while to Chenchiah the Hindu scriptures 'supplanted' the Old Testament, to Appasamy they 'supplemented' the Old Testament.⁴⁴ Appasamy, as the Bishop of the Church of South India naturally stressed the authority of the church. Appasamy uses the analogy of Ramanuja namely the relation between soul and body to the relationship between Christ and church and to the presence of divinity in the human Jesus and to the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper and to the existence of God in the world. This is a good way of explaining the immanence of God.⁴⁵

It seems that Appasamy appreciated the Ashrama Dharma. He writes that his father was observing the third stage of life i.e. Vanaprastha (life of meditation in the forest).⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

Wagner points out that Appasamy's theology has anthropological implications because Appasamy gives more importance to one's own experience. Though experience has got its own value, bhakti tradition as a whole seems to lean heavily on man's experience. To Appasamy, the Scripture and God's revelation are not of greater importance than the Spirit.⁴⁷ Wagner also criticises Appasamy's usage of general terms like 'divine, godly' etc., in places where he could have used pronouns of God.⁴⁸ Boyd points out that though Appasamy has made much out of experience, stressing God's indwelling in man still he has not clearly dealt with the concept and function of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹ The Hindu bhakti tradition also lacks this; but it is exactly here that the Christian tradition should complement the Hindu tradition. However, Boyd points out that Appasamy was not the disciple of Ramanuja but of Christ, for he came far away from bhakti tradition in his views on 'image-worship, transmigration and caste'.⁵⁰ It is true that there are ambiguities in Appasamy but the main basis on which he has built this theology is certainly not unchristian.

Thus the positive aspects in his theology cannot be forgotten. Appasamy is, indeed, the first Indian Christian protestant theologian who consciously attempted to interpret the Christian message at the Indian background. He qualified himself as a doctor of philosophy in the west and was fairly well versed in his Hindu religious tradition too. He himself was a convert from Hinduism. He has rightly found out that the Christian message can best be proclaimed in the native pattern of bhakti marga and thus has lavishly contributed to it. Though it is true that there is an undercurrent for his whole theology viz. his emphasis on the 'Antaryamin' and the value of spiritual experience, he has tried his level best to fill the lacuna in the bhakti tradition; his emphasis on the 'moral union', to a great extent, counter balances the extravagances of experience. If he deviates from the traditional christology in his interpretation of moral union, it is mainly because of the dangers present in the bhakti pattern. By centring his view on moral ethical aspects he has brought the extravagant ecstasies of bhakti to a realistic life in Christ and in society. However, a Lutheran understanding of the concepts of grace and sin would come even closer to the bhakti marga than an Anglican's view.



CHAPTER II

CHENCHIAH'S ANTHROPOLOGY : SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

Life and Work

Chenchiah was born in Nellore on December 1886. His father, Sri Adinarayaniah moved to Madras in the year 1901, where he took up the post of a Munsiff. The same year the family was converted to Christianity. At the prime of his youth, when he was 25, Chenchiah became a Christian. He studied in the Madras Christian College, with Ethics and Philosophy as his special interests. Later he specialised in law and practised as an apprentice under the famous man, Sri. T. Prakasam, who, after independence, became the Chief Minister of the Madras State. Chenchiah pursued his Law studies and took his Master's Degree in Law and became a lecturer in Law College. After his visit to England, in connection with a court case, he became the Chief Judge of the then Pudukkottai State.

With regard to church affiliation, he had close contacts with the United Free Church of Scotland. His presence in the church worship was regular and he married the daughter of the Pastor, whose church in Madras, he was attending. He died in 1959.¹

As a man Chenchiah was a voracious reader; he read with passion romantic writings too. He had close friendship with both Christians and non-Christians. As a writer, he had contributed lavishly to several magazines and he himself was the editor of the magazine, 'The Pilgrim'. His social nature and clear and open talks attracted many to the 'Verandah club' which he organised. By nature, Chenchiah was friendly, but this did not mean that he was wishy-washy with his intellectual opponents; whom he did not like, he criticised vehemently and ruthlessly. Sometimes his pungent comments were loaded with sarcastic thrust. He attacked not only Barth and Advaita because of their absolutism² but also the church

as an institution.³ It must be said that he was not in the good books of the church leaders. His own view of the church was that she is an institution full of strife and quarrels for administrative powers. Since the church could not cope with his theological thunderbolts, he remained alien to the church in his theological thinking. But this does not mean that he decided to quit the church; till the end of his life, he was regular in worship and in spite of his theological differences, he continued to hold his membership in the church.

He catered for his spiritual life in a very personal sense. He valued yoga and meditation; perhaps they stood him in good stead all through his life.⁴ Chenchiah had a high regard for personal prayer.

The main factors which influenced and shaped the theological thoughts of Chenchiah were the general Hindu background and specially the teachings of Sri. Aurobindo and Master C. V. V.⁵ of Kumbakonam.

Chenchiah did not write any theological book; most of his ideas were expressed through his articles in the magazine 'The Guardian' and occasionally through other periodicals. Some of his articles published in connection with the International Missionary Council held at Tambaram in 1938 came out along with others in the form of a book: 'Rethinking Christianity in India' in the same year.⁶

General Theological Setting

The main fulcrum around which the theology of Chenchiah revolves is what he calls 'the raw fact of Christ'.⁷ Christology is the starting point and the main point also. God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ; in fact Jesus was partly God. Though Chenchiah nowhere claims that in Hinduism God's revelations can be found, he thinks that there are many good teachings in Hinduism too. Hinduism does not show the 'new man', but it shows the 'perfect man'. Therefore, one should make use of Hinduism and its thoughts as the western Christians have made use of the Graeco-Roman thoughts. According to Chenchiah God does not reveal Himself through words or books but He reveals through His creation; **creation is revelation.**⁸

Chenchiah asserts that Jesus is neither God in separation from man nor man in separation from God. He is Godman; He is the product of both God and man. So, in this sense, He is 'son of God' and 'son of man'.⁹ Though Chenchiah accepts the doctrine of the Trinity, his writings are centred only on Jesus and Holy Spirit as 'Universalised Jesus'. He emphasises the importance of the role of the Spirit in Indian theology and prophesies that in future Indian contribution will lie specially in this field.¹⁰

Jesus Christ is the New Man, begotten by God and also by Mary ; He is the Adi-Purusha (the first or the original man). He came on earth to usher in the New creation and He remains with men. The church has, of course, packed Him up to heaven. Thus, to Chenchiah Christology is the fulcrum around which the whole theology revolves. In his concept of Christology, Chenchiah expresses his views sometimes like Eutyches and sometimes like Arius also. His central idea is that Jesus is neither man nor God in separation from each other but Jesus is Godman i.e. a fusion of divinity and humanity.¹¹ Jesus, according to Chenchiah, is not equal to God but 'less than God' as Jesus Himself has claimed (Jn. 14:28).¹²

In a graphic way, Chenchiah portrays the picture of Jesus as one who is above man. He is higher than man just as man is higher than the animals. However, man can evolve into His nature, if he can reproduce Christ in himself.¹³

*Reason is our differentia ; the Holy Spirit His.....whether you accept or reject him, there he is, a new creation. The animal cannot reject man, nor can man reject Jesus. God's new creation has begun. If you enter it, you evolve. If you refuse to enter, you shall remain and die in the old order of things.*¹⁴

Through such statements one could clearly find the influence of Aurobindo on spiritual evolution. Chenchiah also describes the Holy Spirit as the Mahashakti (great or dynamic power) or cosmic energy which plays a definite role in the evolution of man through Yoga.¹⁵

Chenchiah's Anthropology

Man is neither divine nor an animal but a human being. That he is human does not mean that he should continue in the same level. If he strives through the practice of Yoga i. e. through the help of the Spirit of God and the Resurrected Christ, he shall evolve into the nature in which Jesus was.

Rebirth

Everyone who comes into such a kind of spiritual evolution experiences a Punarjanma (Rebirth).¹⁶

Jesus Christ is the Adi Purusha of this new creation or evolution and therefore it is absolutely essential to have an intimate contact with Him to attain the same status. A second hand or third hand knowledge of Jesus through a book or guru or an institution will not profit the individual in this process of salvation; what he essentially needs is a pratyaksha anubhava (direct experience) with Jesus.¹⁷

It is important not only to have a direct experience with Jesus but to be united with Him; Chenchiah calls this state as Sayujya (complete union). The other three stages of fellowship, namely Salokya (being in the same sphere), Samipya (being nearer), and Sarupya (being conformed to) are lower spheres of being related to Christ; only in the Sayujya state the believer becomes 'yoked' with Christ.¹⁸

Sin

Man does not need to despair about his sinful condition. It is no use condemning man for his past sins rather than showing him the way to free himself from his bondage to Karma. Jesus' death on the Cross of Calvary is not more important than His victory in the Resurrection. The atoning effect of Jesus lies not in washing the sins of men through His Blood but in reproducing Jesus in man through His Spirit.¹⁹ Therefore, Wagner ascribes the title "Man in transition" to the theology of Chenchiah.²⁰

The concept of sin is the weak point in Chenchiah ; of course, he himself would not like to dwell on it. He comes close to consider sin as Karma.²¹ Therefore Jesus is the New Man, Who is without Karma.

Reason

Chenchiah, however, in no way belittles the human abilities and the power of reason. He writes :

*The sin of science has always been the besetting sin of religion also.....We should not be deceived by the pious jargon that discredits reason and belittles will. St. Paul who condemned 'reason' was the greatest rationalist of all.*²²

Thus Chenchiah gives importance to the role of reason. It is interesting to note that he gives value not only to reason but to personal experience and the historical Christ too.²³ However, it must be remembered that, according to Chenchiah, man enters the spiritual evolution not based on reason but because of the Holy Spirit. Chenchiah sets the reason in man in contrast to the Holy Spirit in Jesus.²⁴

Process

According to Chenchiah, man should not be reckoned as an individual-historical person; no one should be judged according to his own birth. Man is not only in time but moves in time. His salvation is not to be accounted in one of his statements of creed or confession or in baptism but it is in a process. Time is also a mystery :

*Christ is, but we can be Christians completely only in the slow movement of the centuries and not all at once. This is the supreme mystery of time that it manifests creation as a process, gradually unfolding.....Christianity comes to us as a seed and not as a tree.*²⁵

In his desire to uphold his Christology, Chenchiah has pushed the concept of Anthropology behind. Wagner rightly observes :

In the systematic thinking, Anthropology (evolutionistic) is the presupposition of Christology. But, it seems that Chenchiah has formulated his Anthropology in consequence of his Christology and not vice versa.²⁶

Chenchiah does not like the Barthian distinction: God is God and man is man. He does not want to rejoice in the total separation of God and man but finds his joy in the fact that the two have met each other in Jesus Christ. According to him, the dictum 'God is God and man is man and the twain can never meet' is a 'creed' to the Barthians but a heresy to himself; for the twain have met together in Jesus Christ and He is the beginning of a new creation.²⁷

Atonement

In his concept of atonement, Chenchiah emphasises more the 'genetic' fact than the 'faith-repentance' aspect. However, it is difficult to decide as to which theory of Atonement Chenchiah clings to. On the one hand, he stresses the genetic aspect of the new life and on the other, he talks about man reproducing Jesus through Yoga. The following two quotations from Chenchiah bring out the above two aspects clearly.

*Christianity is not a juridical or legal problem but a problem in genetics.....Like reproduction, Christianity is a birth process.²⁸
The incarnation is as much what man is to become as what God has become.²⁹*

Chenchiah does not hesitate to mention the role of the Spirit in the creation of the new humanity. The new humanity evolves because of Jesus Christ and through the active involvement of the Holy Spirit in man who reproduces Jesus in himself in the way of Yoga.³⁰ Thus it could be said that Chenchiah gives more weight to the birth of Christ than to His death. According to him, it is not the Good Friday but the Christmas that stands as the turning point in the history of the world.

Church

Chenchiah's concept of the church is mainly negative. Such an attitude is applicable to the concepts of the Ministry and the Sacraments also. Chenchiah thought of the church organisation as an undesirable institution in India. Since he emphasised the personal experience of man i.e. a direct contact with the living Christ through the Holy Spirit, he would not accept either the age old doctrines of the church or the value of the sacraments or the hierarchical ministry in the church. He cleared them all in a few questions saying :

*Why do churches and books intervene and bring Him to us like water from a distant fountain head? If there could be direct contact with Jesus, why should we seek it through bread and wine? If God speaks to us today, why hear his words through a book written about twenty centuries ago?*³¹

It is exciting to read what Chenchiah has written on 'The Hindu Mind and the Church' and on 'Church Union'.³² Chenchiah distinguishes between the western type of corporation churches and the Indian type of free religion. He is against any form of organisation and thereby compulsion in the field of religion. Church union in India, according to him, has started from the wrong end; it is moved by ecclesiastical leaders and thrust on individual members.³³ Chenchiah sarcastically remarks that while Catholics and Protestants cooperate with each other as brothers in the social field, it is in the ecclesiastical field that they find their enmity. Therefore, he advocates that the church as an organisation must disappear for the well-being of the unity of the Christians in India. So he wrote :

*The people of God first, temple next.*³⁴

Ethics

Chenchiah also did not like the Church because the concept of sin occupied its central place, thereby bringing the concept of the church to an ethical discipline. Christianity, therefore, should not be made a 'religion of penitence'.³⁵ Thus, Chenchiah is typically Hindu in giving ethics and the correction of unethical behaviour a place not closely connected to the core of religion, but only to the needs of the society.³⁶

Chenchiah opines that ethics is not a vital aspect in Hinduism ; he distinguishes different roles of ethics in the Semitic and Hindu religions. While truth is explained in terms of ethics in the Semitic religion, truth is seen in the principle of harmony in Hinduism. According to Chenchiah :

*To the Semitic, truth is ethical, dividing the right from the wrong, good from the bad. To the Hindu, truth is the support uniting the divisions on the surface..... Hinduism celebrates the end of life, Christianity, its birth.*⁸⁷

Conclusion

It is difficult to fix Chenchiah to one type of marga as it could be done with Appasamy (Bhakti marga). However, it could be said that he leaned more to the Gnana marga. Giving more importance to ideas than to realism, he wrote :

*It is better to live in lovely dreams than in the dust and muck which goes by the name of 'Realism'.*⁸⁸

Chenchiah had, of course, refuted Bhakti marga as a preferable way of life.⁸⁹ In one way, it could be said that Chenchiah rejected Gnana marga too in that he refuted the absolutistic tendency in Advaita. It is possible to say that Chenchiah was following a Parinama marga (a way of evolution). Chenchiah's main ideas can be found in the following passage, in his own words :

*If Christianity in its distinctive nature is the creation of a new type-man out of ordinary man - a type which transcends human limitations by reason of its being the outcome of a new creative life, the Holy Spirit - then in the true sense of the term it cannot be taught; nor can it be an ethical discipline - a character produced by will-power and obedience to an external ideal. We may teach the doctrine and dogma.....But the Gospel of Jesus operates in a different region. The Church must engross itself with the Holy Spirit, His place in creation! His methods of operation - and with the problems of new birth. We do not know what life is, yet we reproduce it.....The Christian has to develop the Yoga of the Holy Spirit - with a new sadhana of eternal life. The Church and Church Government, even the special Gospel in theory and practice, are secondary problems.*⁴⁰

Evaluation

Chenchiah has expressed his theological ideas as a lay thinker. He has made a good contribution to the awakening of Indian Christian theological ideas. He wanted to interpret Christ, Whom he had accepted, in his Indian-Hindu background. He cherished the culture in which he was born and brought up, although he found positive aspects in other cultures too.

His interpretation of salvation as a process is a good corrective against the onslaught of the sectarian movements which forget the futuristic element in the salvation of man. The many indigenous terms he brought into use in Christian theology e.g. Punarjanma Mahashakthi, Yoga etc. were easily understood by his fellow Christians. In emphasising the direct experience with Jesus as the Risen Lord, he is quite in line with the Indian spirituality, emphasising the existential aspect. It must be pointed out to the credit of Chenchiah, that he was the first Indian theologian who pointed out the weak points of Barth and criticised them vehemently. However, there are many drawbacks in his theology which should be brought to light. While Chenchiah emphasises the Punarjanma of man, he does not bring out in equally clear terms the position from which he is to be redeemed. Chenchiah clearly visualises the future state to which man is called to be in Christ; but the state from which man is to pass to the next is vague. Boyd rightly remarks :

*Chenchiah has comparatively little to say about the natural man and his state, for his whole theology is oriented towards a new creation, towards what man becomes in Christ.*⁴¹

Chenchiah has introduced many new phrases which he did not clearly explain: e.g. he talked of 'reproducing Jesus' as an important point in the concept of salvation, but he did not explain how to reproduce Jesus in oneself.⁴² He also did not explain what it means to say that rebirth is a problem of 'genetics'. In his Christology, Chenchiah was not quite clear when he said that Jesus is neither God nor man but Godman. One is reminded of Arius and Eutychus when one reads Chenchiah's Christology. Chenchiah is also not consistent in his expressions. In one essay he accepts Jesus as the Son of God and in another he rejects it.

Jesus is not God and is not Man, but is the Son of God and the Son of Man. ⁴³

Jesus is not the 'son' — Son of God or Son of Man — He is the product of God and man, not God-man. ⁴⁴

Thangasamy also points out the inconsistency in Chenchiah specially in his idea of the new creation. It is not clear whether Chenchiah understands this new creation through genetical reproduction or through a process.

At times Chenchiah seems to envisage the process of the formation of the spiritual race of man as a biological mutation of the whole species but at times also as the creative transforming activity of the Holy Spirit in individual within the existing biological state. ⁴⁵

It has been pointed out that Chenchiah compared the Christian concept of sin with the Hindu concept of Karma. Though it is appreciable that Chenchiah tries to explain the concept of sin to an Indian in Indian terms which are meaningful to them, the difference between the concepts of Karma and sin must be clarified. Karma and sin cannot be identified with each other because while there can be good Karma, there can be no good sin. The Indian terminology Karma subscribes to both positive and negative aspects. This difference must be taken into account while comparing Karma with sin.

Chenchiah's main criticism was against the church as an institution. Although the Indian church deserves his criticism to some extent, the positive aspect of the concept of the church shall not be forgotten. Chenchiah's separation of social structure from religious structure is unclear. If society must have a structure, religion cannot be a beating in the air. It is also surprising that Chenchiah had not so violently denounced the caste structure in India as he did with the church! But if the argument of Chenchiah is driven further, there is no need for church union, if by church union an institutional structure is meant; on the other hand, among the Indian Christians, there exists already some kind of union in the area of social living together. Of course, religious doctrines will separate one from the other; but this is a healthy sign for the

existence of religious freedom which Chenchiah really wants. Are there not many divisions in Hinduism, various doctrines and sects and despite these, the Indians claim to be one nation? Has not history echoed the great clashes between Vaishnavites and Saivites? Is it possible to accept the head and reject its own body? If Christ came to teach the world anything, is it not of foremost importance, that he taught God as Father - Father, Who allows the sun to shine both on the good as well as the bad?

Religion also must have discipline as in society. Man is intrinsically one; his spirit cannot and must not live in a different world other than his body. The idea of **totus homo** is very important. Man is a body - spirit - being. The traversity of his spiritual experiences must be checked by his real love towards his neighbour. There can be no real love to God (Invisible) if this cannot be shared with His children (visible).

The way out for a meaningful church is to reform the church and not to destroy her. The church, ofcourse, had never been infallible. But while throwing out the dirty water from the bath-tub, the baby must not be thrown away. It is also high time that the word church was clearly defined in India. It is not just an association with membership fee, rules and regulations. It is also a place where the poor come to receive social and spiritual help. It is a place, where they can repeatedly hear the way they have to tread, guided by God's word. It is a place, where they get the prasadam (food) for the renewal of their spiritual life. Why then should the church be negatively looked upon? If man has converted the church into a quarrelling institute, it only shows the nature of man, what he is capable of. It is never the church concept, which is wrong, but the people who form the church. Indians have to learn to live together religiously also.

Thus, in evaluating Chenchiah's theology, one may conclude that he was non-orthodox in some of his ideas. But if he had been unsystematic in some places and interpreted Christianity in a very different way, opposing the orthodoxy of his times, it must be seen from his interest as a convert from Hinduism to grapple with the substance and structure of Christianity. Chenchiah was a sincere Christian; there is no doubt about it, as it is seen from his personal

spiritual life. To his great credit, it must be said that inspite of his status in society and without having a normal theological education, Chenchiah had contributed even more than some of the Indian theologians to the rethinking and new awakening of Christianity in India. Chenchiah was trying to lay the foundation for a new Indian Christian theology. It was not easy for him but he did not give up hope despite mounting oppositions. He dug here and there, not systematically. May be, none can build an Indian Christian theology on his structure. But he made the people be aware of the fact as to what kind of land and soil it is on which the future theologians must build i.e. he has raised valid theological insights, meaningful for the Indian context, which need to be tackled in the course of the formation of a Christian theology for India.



CHAPTER III

CHAKKARAI'S ANTHROPOLOGY : BHAKTI OF THE CROSS

Life and Work

Chakkarai was born a Hindu on 17th January 1880 in Madras. He was educated in Christian schools, where he came into a close contact with Christians and he became a Christian in 1903. In his career, he has worked as a teacher, as a lawyer and as a mission society worker. During the nineteen twenties, he joined the Gandhian National Movement ; he was also editing a Christian magazine called "The Christian Patriot". His first marriage brought him in close relationship with Chenchiah. His main contributions lie in the field of Trade Unions. Several times he was elected to the Madras corporation as councillor and once as its Mayor. He was once elected to the Legislative Council of the state of Madras. Chakkarai died in 1958.¹

Strictly speaking, though Chakkarai was a genuine leader in the National movement, involving himself in politics, sometimes in the Labour Movement and also in administration, his literary contributions on Christianity amounted to several hundred pages. Most of his thoughts can be found in two of his books : 'Jesus the Avatar' and 'The Cross and Indian Thought' published in 1930 and 1932 respectively.² He also wrote many articles, some published in books and some in magazines.³ About him the following have written : R. Boyd, G. C. Oosthuizen, P. T. Thomas, H. Wagner, A. Mookenthottam and the Gurukul Research Group.⁴

General background of Chakkarai's Theology

It is difficult to find the central point in Chakkarai's theology. Unlike Appasamy or Chenchiah, he wrote his theology without a real fulcrum on which it should revolve. However, though there is no clear structure in his theology, the following points seem to be his main concerns ; Christology, Atonement and Indigenisation. Sometimes it becomes difficult to find out whether Chakkarai wants to be a Hindu-Christian or Christian-Hindu. The great knowledge he had gathered in Hinduism, before he became a Christian stood him in good stead throughout his writings. He never threw away that which is Hindu as " rubbish " but always cherished to hold its validity in the light of the Cross. It may be possible to say that Chakkarai writes a theology of the Cross ; of all the Indian Christian theologians, Chakkarai makes the best use of the Cross. It was the Cross which turned him to be a Christian. It was the Cross, with its perennial radiation of spiritual power that held him in ever inspiring awe for the love of Jesus Christ.⁵ However, Chakkarai does not make the Cross as the centre of his theology. The reason is that unlike Paul or Luther, Chakkarai's problem was different ; he wanted to interpret the wonder of the Cross in the light of his own religious wisdom. However, in writing his theology, Chakkarai is more a Christian than a Hindu like Chenchiah. This does not mean that they were partly unbelievers; on the contrary both were strong believers in Jesus Christ. To Chakkarai, the criterion of theology is to be found in experience and the Bible (while to Chenchiah it is experience and philosophical structure.) Both had set experience as the starting point for religion.⁶

According to Chakkarai, Indian Christians have two religious longings which they seek to satisfy :

1. to be in direct contact with Jesus.
2. to have a rebirth i.e. to be reborn in the image of Jesus.⁷

Chakkarai desired to write his Indian Christian Theology in order that Indians may be satisfied of these two longings.

Generally speaking, Indian theologians prefer to speak of the resurrection of Jesus Christ rather than of His Cross. Though Chakkarai does not do so, he also, in fact, undermines the importance of the Cross when he talks about resurrection.⁸

Here I would say that in our church teaching, even more in our preaching, the Gospel of the Resurrection is not emphasised; we begin and end with the Gospel of the Cross and Death of the Lord. There are other Gospels - the Gospel of His life, the Gospel of the Resurrection, the Gospel of His ascension and the Gospel of His heavenly priesthood and the Gospel of the Parousia.⁹

Christology

Ofcourse, Christology plays a dominating role in the theology of Chakkarai. Chakkarai knows no other God than the one revealed in and through Jesus Christ. He argues eloquently that Jesus is not deified by His followers for the main reason that the Jews never can deify a human being.¹⁰ They did not deify Moses or Elijah. Christ's resurrection is a historical fact for Chakkarai. Though Chakkarai does not give much value to history in the field of religion, he asserts as against Barth, that resurrection must be a historical fact because men who live in history have seen Him and their lives have proved their confrontation with the risen Jesus.¹¹

Describing the humanity of Jesus, Chakkarai brings out two important traits: His prayer life and His sinlessness. One of the main reasons for Jesus' unique human nature is attributed to the close fellowship He had with God, His Father through prayer. Perhaps other men like the old rishis of India also could have such a prayer life. But the difference lies in the fact that while their prayers had a definite aim, Jesus' prayer life is impenetrably hidden in light.¹²

The prayer life of our Lord is characteristic of His Ministry in a unique manner, and in one sense constitutes the mystery of His consciousness. Unless we dive deep into this consciousness, it would be practically impossible to elucidate His personality. Prayer is the central sphere from which all the aspects of the religious life radiate. In proportion to the greatness of the man is the mystery of his communion with God and the spiritual world; and in the case of Jesus it reaches, so far as is known in history, the highest point.¹³

It is possible to understand the life of Jesus only when one understands His prayer life.¹⁴

According to Chakkarai sinlessness is not a feature outside the realms of humanity because Jesus was human and still without sin. Though this idea runs contrary to the nature of a normal man, it could be understood that Chakkarai meant such a humanity only in the case of Jesus. He wrote :

It may be considered that ordinary humanity, as we have known it in history, has never shown this sinlessness, and yet there is the fact that the humanity of Jesus included this element of sinlessness. Therefore, it is maintained in this book that we do not know all about the possibilities of humanity till we have analysed the humanity of Jesus.¹⁵

Chakkarai's Anthropology

According to Chakkarai, Christology (not Theology) must decide anthropology.

His humanity lays down the measure and norm of our humanity; our humanity is not to judge the height and depth of His. To use Indian phraseology, He is the Sat purusha (real Man); and though we are not asat (unreal), we are dominated by maya.¹⁶

Maya stands not for unreality but that the true humanity in us has been obscured by some taint, and that its growth is retarded.

The question : " what is humanity ?" must be judged according to the humanity of Jesus because true humanum is found only in Jesus. Anthropology, for that matter, theology also takes it starting point from Christology. Thus Jesus reveals the quality of God and the quality of man. Man can realise the true 'humanum' if he can follow Jesus' prayer life. The son of God living in unbroken fellowship with God close to people, reveals by his contrast the sinfulness of man - and what a true man is meant to be. The question what is man can be answered only in prayer.¹⁷ Jesus' transfiguration is real; only those who do not believe in the power of prayer and yoga disbelieve it. It may cited here that what Chenchiah means by yoga has the same sense in Chakkarai's view of prayer. Unlike Appasamy's "moral" union and Chenchiah's "genetic" union, Chakkarai holds that the best analogy to explain Jesus human-divine union is to be found in the union of body and mind which produces personality.¹⁸

According to Chakkarai man has two kinds of bodies viz. sthula sarira (outer or material) and sukshma sarira (inner or subtler). Explaining the nature of the body which the Resurrected Lord had, Chakkarai says :

That the Resurrection of the Lord is not a disembodied ghost but the sukshma sarira - the inner and subtler body - or sheath beyond and behind the sthula sarira.

The sthula sarira perishes with the death of man but his sukshma sarira can still live.²¹

Man comes to the knowledge of God only through his experience of the risen Christ, Who is also the Holy Spirit. The words of the Bible can not lead him to the living Christ unless the Spirit enlightens his eyes. Though the historical Christ is closely connected with the risen Christ, man cannot know the historical Christ today and it is unnecessary too. For an Indian, the Christ of experience is far more important than the historical Christ.

*The oriental consciousness must in reason and as a matter of God-ordained decree ground itself in the spirit-realm. That which is called history or the historical Jesus,.....and sruti must be subordinated, and take their place round this central truth on Christianity. The Spirit of Jesus is the organic principle of Christian history, thought and life.*²³

Even Chakkarai, who stressed the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and His sinlessness in comparison with the ordinary man, follows the Indian patterns of spirituality by considering man as 'a god'.²³ The distinction between God as creator and man as creature glide into the mystical sphere where both seem to lose their distinctions but gain a unity. 'Aham Brahmasmi' is a statement which a Hindu can accept easily. Chakkarai points out that in the Christian church also, the early bhaktas had such a kind of experience i.e.

*the Christian bhaktas and rishis had the experience after Christ's visible departure, of the energising of the spirit of Jesus in their own souls.*²⁴

Man is small but God is great. But intrinsically there is something in them both, that is of the same nature because both are Purusha (Person)

*The path of salvation lay in the individual Purusha reaching the larger Purusha, somehow and at sometime.*²⁵

Spirit stands for today, power, and authority while Jesus of history belongs to 'yesterday' and cross-bearing. According to Chakkarai man must have received the spirit in order to be a bhakta i.e. a Christian.²⁶ Pentecost is important; it is the third phase of the incarnation (manger and resurrection being the first two phases).²⁷ When Chakkarai talks of the 'face that dominates' during the bhakta's dhyana or prayer, he means the face of Jesus of experience and not the Jesus of history.²⁸ History is not important as mere facts, but what stands behind it as its hidden meaning and as its motivating power viz. the spiritual.

*God is thus the cosmic process, reaching to man as spirit, and through spirit reaching deity. Deity is therefore not to be identified with spirit, or even righteousness, but is the culmination that includes and transcends them.*²⁹

Man has a conscience. Since conscience convicts one of his failure or weakness or sin, Jesus' forgiveness is to take away the sting of such failure. Though Chakkarai talks of conscience in this way, it is very difficult to know what he means by conscience. Whether forgiveness is directly connected with Absolution pronounced by a pastor or with the Lord's Supper is not quite clear.³⁰

Man is emotional being. When Chakkarai says that a Christian is a bhakta, the term "bhakta" is closer to the concept of mysticism rather than faith.³¹ In his doctrine of Atonement, Chakkarai rejects Anselmian view that God's Honour was affected by man's sin; instead, God's Heart is affected, says Chakkarai.³² Speaking about the revivalist preachers who throw their hearers under the "mercy seat" of God by pointing out their sins, Chakkarai says that though the Indians are generally emotional, their 'emotionalism shall not be roused from this side'.³³

Law and Gospel

The concept of Law is seen in the concept of Karma.³⁴ That means Chakkarai understands the term Karma in a negative sense.

The Gospel, according to Chakkarai, does not consist in arousing the sinful consciousness in man and then in proclaiming forgiveness; but on the contrary, by pointing to the holiness, glory and beauty of Jesus.³⁵

Because sin is connected with Karma, Chakkarai takes a rather negative view of life. According to Chakkarai, life in this world does not belong to the spiritual realm. Sin is samsara i.e. the cycle of births.³⁶ Chakkarai does not give a Hindu view of creation; he takes the biblical account for granted. He compares the wandering of the prodigal son (or the lost sheep) to the sin of

man. Man has come away from God, got involved in the affairs of this world which drags him still further into it. This involvement in the world affair must be broken and man should come back to God in Jesus Christ. Even good works cannot save him since involvement in this world leads only to further involvement-though in a better stage.³⁷

One might interpret Chakkarai's belief as a kind of quasi-universalism. But this is only a supposition. Talking about Hindus and Christians he says :

*The salvation of each, as understood by each, is by the grace of the Lord; the former by the grace of God without the historical Christ and the other by the grace of God in Christ.*³⁸

Chakkarai also wrote :

*When his (a Hindu's) eye opens on another day in another world, he will know who has saved him. Tell them the veil is on his face, then it will be lifted, and he will behold Him as he is.*³⁹

Chakkarai has a positive view of spiritual healing,⁴⁰ though it might look peculiar to 'many enlightened moderns'. Chakkarai does not like the trend in Hinduism that the redeemed saint i.e. the bhakta should lead a life of a guru, as if he is on higher spiritual level.⁴¹

Chakkarai also rejects any idea of salvation through karma marga; the Gospel lies in the field of bhakti or gnana marga. He also brings out clearly the implication of past, present and future in the concept of salvation. Salvation is a process ; it is never accidental; even in the case of saint Paul, he must have had a preparation period.⁴²

Ethics

A clarity in the relation between ethics and law is lacking in Chakkarai ; whether the redeemed person is totally freed from law to do what he likes or still has got the law of love is not clear. The

life of the redeemed person, his ethical responsibility, social involvement have not found a vent in his theological structure. Oosthuizen says :

*Hinduism e.g. has 'never laid any emphasis on God's holiness in the sense of righteousness and moral holiness', which is an important element in Israel's religious heritage.*⁴³

Bondage

According to Chakkarai man has several bondages. Not only Karma is a bondage but even the society which seems to take care of man also. This leaves man in a confused state. Chakkarai describes excellently the indecisiveness of the Indian mind. He cites the example of Hamlet's famous word 'to be or not to be' as the perennial dilemma of the Indian, tossed between perplexities of life and yet finding himself only in a dharma sangata (confronted by two equal and important but opposite goods: e.g. a doctor telling the truth to the heart patient that his father or son is dead or telling a lie in order to save the patient's life.) According to Chakkarai the decision between good and evil is unclear. Society is good on the one hand trying to pick up those who are desperate but on the other hand society itself is a great burden to the free individual who wants progress in his life, through its multifarious caste and family regulations and rules. He expresses these ideas excellently in the following words :

One single act may have influence altogether beyond the range of our calculus. And the wise, fearing the repercussion of vital endeavour, would refrain from it. Indian story and experience are full of the dark shadows of this fear, in addition to the lights derived from the joy and beauty of social ties..... Samsara duhkha sagara (life is an ocean of sorrow). Life, the family life (the wife herself is called our samsara) is the ocean of unhappiness. What then is the solution?.....And when family life fails, when man, or woman or the melody of the child, sweeter than veena of the sage Narada, pleases not and palls, then the instinct to flee overpowers the Indian, and he betakes himself to a life of religious quest and wandering..... Society is veritably our blessing as well as our curse. Therefore

*to depart from evil, may, even to depart from good, is our gain ...The cry and quest is for redemption from the solidarity of man and the in exorableness of Karma.*⁴⁴

Evaluation

As a lay man, Chakkarai has contributed his mite to the treasury of Indian Christian theology. He has brought many Indian terms (like Avatar, Antaratman, Samsara, Yajna, Rishi, Homa etc.) into the theological vocabulary. Indian terms are rampant in his writings. His Christological contribution is noteworthy. He explains the Person (Jesus the Avatar) and work (The Cross and Indian Thought) of Christ at the Indian background with many Indian thought forms. The way in which he relates the Christian fact of the Cross at the Indian background of bhakti deserves praise. Among all the Indian Christian theologians, Chakkarai's best contribution is to be found in his view on prayer and the divinity of Christ.⁴⁵

However, Chakkarai has no clear system and he is vague ; whether his main motive is to proclaim Jesus Christ as the only Lord and Saviour of the world (which he, of course, does) or to establish the fact that Hindu spirituality has a lot to help one to understand Christ is an essential question. He writes that none can have any kind of right knowledge of God apart from Jesus Christ but at the same time believes that God has spoken through his own country men (rishis).⁴⁶ He also thinks that God has revealed the idea of grace, as against Law (Karma) already to the rishis before His revelation through the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴⁷ Chakkarai wants to identify himself more on the side of the 'fundamentalists' than with the 'modernists'.⁴⁸ However, he denies Baptism and the Lord's supper as having been instituted by Jesus Christ. Though Chakkarai laid great value on both OT and NT, still he considers the sacraments as not absolutely indispensable.⁴⁹ His view of sin in terms of Samsara gives a negative attitude to life on earth.⁵⁰ His theology must be taken with a pinch of salt i.e. with a positive attitude towards involvement in the world, considering the world as God's creation.⁵¹ It is interesting to note that Chakkarai does not want to decide on the question of transmigration and rebirth.⁵² He considers it as 'an optional doctrine' which a Christian may accept or reject.

Boyd brings out all the appreciable contributions of Chakkarai viz. his view on the sakti of the Cross and Jesus as Antaratman while Oosthuizen criticises him bitterly. One point which I find interesting in Chakkarai is that the bhakta of Christ "looks at the world with His eyes, and feels with His heart, and thinks with his mind".⁵³ Chakkarai realised the importance of the harmony of body, mind and soul for a right understanding of man.

Chakkarai's bhakti of the Cross was very Indian and emotional ; it needs a positive view of Karma, as the responsibility of a Christian in his life together with his neighbours.



CHAPTER IV

DEVANANDAN'S ANTHROPOLOGY: 'A NEW ANTHROPOLOGY'

Life and Work

Devanandan is a turning point in the development of Indian Christian Theology. All those Indian theologians who preceded him were bound by the Indian way of relegating anthropology to the margin. It was he who as the first Indian Christian theologian brought the study of anthropology to the forefront and gave it its due place. Though Appasamy, Chenchiah and Chakkarai had also spoken about the concept of man, it is only in Devanandan that anthropology gets a legitimate place in the theological structure.

Paul David Devanandan was born on 8th July 1901 in Madras to Christian parents. His father was ordained minister in Madras. Devanandan had his school career in Madras, Trichinopoly and Hyderabad. After a brief period of teaching work in Jaffna, he entered college studies in Madras University. Before he began his theological studies, he had a short span of secretaryship period under the Christian leader K. T. Paul (1876—1931), who was a friend of Mahatma Gandhi. Paul took Devanandan to America in 1924 as his secretary. Devanandan, however continued his stay in America in order to do his doctoral work (1925—1932) at the Pacific School of Religion, California. He wrote his dissertation on "The Concept of Maya".

Returning to India in 1932, he found a position in the United Theological College, Bangalore as lecturer, where he worked till 1949. He was teaching Comparative Religions and Philosophy. Though his field of studies was Philosophy and Religions,

Devanandan liked to be identified with the theologians; this is seen in his distinction between Philosophy and Theology. He points out, according to J. Wietzke, that while Philosophy is interested only in the logical causality of the absolute Reality, theology goes further to deal with the practicability of the working of faith, thereby creating a possibility for personal relationship between men and providing space for God's creative work among men.¹

Thus, Devanandan brings it out clearly by saying that in India, philosophy is inseparably connected with religion because philosophy in India is not to be thought of in terms of abstract ideas only.²

In 1948 he presented a paper on 'The Ecumenical Movement and the Younger Churches' in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Amsterdam. In 1949 he joined the New Delhi Y.M.C.A. as its General Secretary where he worked till 1955. He was visiting Professor in New York and Cambridge for one year (1956-57). In 1957 he took his most suitable post in the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society (CISRS) as its first Director in which post he continued till 1962 when he died of heart attack on his way to a conference in Dehra Dun.³

The following factors have made an impact on his life, namely, his mother, his connections with K. T. Paul, his education in the U.S.A., his contacts with the ecumenical circles and the transitional time of the pre-independent to independent India with a new social awakening and a need for national development.⁴ Though Devanandan accepted the theological insights of Barth and Kraemer to some extent, he has digressed from their line of approach in their view of non-Christian religions. This digression has enabled him to deal with his subject more on 'a detailed and sympathetic study of man and society in modern India'.⁵

J. Wietzke lists 107 articles which Devanandan wrote in several magazines, apart from book reviews and unpublished essays. Devanandan had also been the co-editor of 11 books. The following books are his important contributions,⁶

1. **The Concept of Maya**, 1950
2. **Our Responsibility** to Non-Christian Members, 1953
3. **Living Hinduism**, 1958,
4. **The Gospel** and the Hindu Intellectual, 1958.
5. **Our Task** Today, 1958.
6. **Resurgent Hinduism**, 1958.
7. **The Dravida Kazhagam**, 1960.
8. **The Gospel and Renascent Hinduism**, 1961.
9. **Christian Concern** in Hinduism, 1961.
10. **Christian Issues** in Southern Asia, 1963.
11. **Preparation** for Dialogue, 1964.

A New Anthropology for a New India

Though Devanandan has made a lasting impact in the sense that he has given some guidelines and showed the direction towards an Indian Christian anthropology, his main contribution lies in different fields. Devanandan writes a chapter on 'Man-Whence and Whither - As a Christian sees it' in his book 'Preparation for Dialogue' (pp. 146-161). He also writes a chapter on 'Man in Society according to Neo-Hinduism' in the same book. (pp. 28-41). Unfortunately he did not live long enough to develop his views on anthropology. His contributions lie specially in the context of a 'New India'. Wietzke finds that Devanandan's main contributions are to be found in his ideas on religions, society, indigenisation and ecumenism.⁷

Devanandan has devoted several pages to describe the changing situation in India which demands a change in the theological outlook too. Hinduism also has begun changing the view of man from small caste groups to larger groups of society; this change has begun already by the beginning of the 19th century. He writes :

From then on there has been a steady modification of the concepts of man and of society in Hindu thought and practice. Perhaps the greatest force in making for this change was nationalism.⁸

It is possible to deduce from the writing of Devanandan that he had an interest in the nation-building. His contacts with K. T. Paul is only a reflection of the same. Wietzke cites his nationalistic attitude in changing his name in America from Paul Devanandan David to Paul David Devanandan.⁹ M. M. Thomas found the importance of Devanandan's ideas on new India and therefore called Devanandan's theology as: 'The Struggle to provide a Spiritual Basis for the New India'.¹⁰ Morton who wrote an article on 'The Humanism of Paul David Devanandan' considered him as a patriot and a 'nationalist'.¹¹ Devanandan also found a change in India due to the industrial development.¹² His book preparation for a Dialogue, which represents his 'mature thoughts' bears the subtitle as follows: 'A Collection of Essays on Hinduism and Christianity in New India'.¹³ It is clear from the above facts that Devanandan realised that India is passing through a great change. The factors that contributed to this change might have been the awakening spirit of nationalism, the changes brought by industrial development and of course the fact of India obtaining independence and together with it the responsibility to build a nation. Standing at the threshold of this new situation, Devanandan perceived that 'classical theology' is giving way to the formation of 'a new anthropology'.¹⁴

General Background of the Devanandan's Theology

Unlike Chenchiah, who based his views on Indian philosophy and Appasamy, who based his theology on Bhakti marga, Devanandan based his theology on biblical insights¹⁵ and on his awareness to his social environment. From his ecumenical contacts, naturally, he is closer to Barth and Kraemer rather than to Bultmann or Tillich. He has taken much from Barth and Kraemer, so far as their Biblical realism is in agreement with his social approach; otherwise he has deviated from them, specially in his treatment of Non-Christian religions.

The main thesis of Devanandan runs on the following lines: the 'old' is passing away and the 'new' is drawing - economically, socially and religiously in India. This change in the socio-religious field has been ushered in through Reform-Hindu movements

beginning from Raja Rammohan Roy to Radhakrishnan and Vinoba Bhave. It is interesting to note here that in most cases in India, the religious leaders were at the same time social reformers.¹⁶

Devanandan also found that Radhakrishnan has given a new interpretation for old concepts like maya, caste karma etc. and advocated that Christians shall not take a negative attitude against old Hindu ideas but set themselves in dialogue with neo-Hinduistic views.¹⁷

God is personal i.e. One Who is able to relate Himself with others. Here, Devanandan is in full agreement with the Barthian view of personality of God and he quotes him too.¹⁸ However, God is unlike man because He is divine.¹⁹ Thus the concept of personality plays a great role in Devanandan in deciding his concept of God and man. In his view of man, Devanandan emphasises the aspect of personality. A man's personality reflects his responsible relationship to God, his Creator and man, his neighbour. The meaning of personality is to be derived from the concept of God. However, Devanandan defines God's personality as something "incomprehensible" (Barth) or as supra-personal (Farmer).²⁰ He agrees with Aquinas in saying that God's personality must be interpreted in an 'analogous sense'.²¹ Personality implies a purposeful striving. However, ultimate truth reveals itself in an I-Thou relationship which is personal.²² The acts of God are on a different level than the acts of man; the former forms the Heilsegschichte (salvation history) while the latter forms the secular history.²³

Devanandan stresses the fact that God has carried out in Christ His purpose for the whole creation and man can attain salvation in and through Jesus Christ.

In Christ we have a forecast of what God intends man to be from the beginning of creation. And more, of what God is making of man when he totally surrenders himself to the creative purpose in God's design for mankind.

It is the living Presence which as the living Centre draws each one of us towards it. A magnet may draw bits of iron pieces towards it by a blind force. But the living Christ who draws

*us towards Him and together to each one of us is a creative, healing, purposive Reality. Therefore, in the fellowship where the living God is at the Centre, an amazing change takes place in the deep within of the men and women who enter into such a fellowship. He makes over again, makes anew each one of them. 'Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation.'*²³

Devanandan expresses both the pros and cons of bhakti. Man is called to be a bhakta; however he must avoid the pitfalls of individualism and vain emotion of bhakti.

And because such bhakti is impossible for any individual atman except in the context of a sense of human solidarity (loka-sangraha) the "love of the neighbour" is an integral aspect of the Christian understanding of bhakti, devotion-in-community.

*In this-worldly life, the persistence of sin in man both as a voluntary and a constituent aspect of his nature makes it impossible for him to realise his destiny. In all bhakti of the empirical man there is an element of this perversity which stands in the way of our bhakti now being truly bhakti.*³²

Thus man cannot achieve the final bliss without the involvement and grace of God. God Himself, therefore, leads humanity to that and to which He has created everything.²⁴

Man before God

Man is a creature created by God. Actually Devanandan wants to stress the aspects of creatureliness of man in the Christian-Hindu dialogue. The world and all that is in it is not just Maya or something which only seems to be real. Man's existence is as real as the purpose for which he is created by God. Man's existence in this world is meaningful because the purpose and the plan of God, which He has for man, is being worked out in history and through creation.²⁵

Devanandan wants to stress this aspect of creation in Christian-Hindu dialogue because the concepts of creation in Hinduism is very vague and confusing.²⁶ In fact, there is not one view of creation in Hinduism, but many.²⁷

According to Hinduism man has evolved not just from material substance ; but has his beginning from the divine soul. So, strictly speaking, man is not only mortal ; though his earthly body will die and decompose, the spiritual soul that has formed his real self is immortal. Such a kind of basic assumption is also necessitated for the concept of Karma-samsara. The different births, one takes, must be connected by one common link which is found in the immortal soul. Thus the division of man into two parts-one earthly, destructible, inferior and the other spiritual, imperishable and superior-has got unquestioned acceptance in Hinduism. This it is made clear that the concept of man in Hindu thought is essentially interlinked with many other concepts especially Karma and rebirth.²⁸

Therefore it is quite understandable that Devanandan wants to stress the human aspect of man, in order to establish a clear distinction between the human and the divine' the creature and the Creator.

According to Devanandan, man is not only a creature like the other creatures of the world ; but he is a creature with a special endowment from God. He is in the image of God ; he is a purusha.²⁹

The idea that man is created in God's image and that he is in a relationship with Him, takes it for granted that God is personal. God is not an unknown 'It', but a Person who reveals Himself to man and relates Himself to man as the 'Thou'. So man cannot claim to have a self or personality (purusatva) unless he stands in the I-Thou relationship with God. So Devanandan uses the phrase "man-in-relation-with-God".³⁰

The image of God implies a 'kinship' of man with God whereby a father-son relationship is obvious.

According to Devanandan, man is an agent ; he can do what he likes. But the question is not whether he is able to do this or that ; but what should he do ? If he should do, what he ought to do, then he must be in absolute dependence on God. He can be a bhakta, only if he does the Bhagavan's (God's) will.³¹ If his will

is other than that of the Bhagavan, then he cannot be a bhakta ; this means that the will of the bhakta coalesces with that of the Bhagavan ; for only in so doing can the will of God be done on earth.³²

Hinduism has always emphasised more of the speculative aspect of the Absolute in its classical theology.³³ This means that the other side of theology i.e. the understanding of man has always been sacrificed at the altar of theology. The emphasis of the one side was done at the cost of the other side of it.³⁴ Therefore, Devanandan suggests 3 fields in which modern Hinduism should grapple with more intensively i.e. 1. to understand man as a creature 2. to understand man in relation to God and 3. to understand man as a person in society striving towards a purposeful end.³⁵

Devanandan stresses the fact that man is a sinner. Sin is to cut the relationship with God,³⁶ because man is man only in his relation to God. The 'fall' is the result of a 'self-willed creature'.³⁷ Thus sin is the wrong use of the free will of man. Devanandan uses many terms to depict the sinful nature of man. According to him, sin is an act, or condition or even thought; it is disobedience; it is selfishness individual or collective.³⁸ Thus Devanandan brings varied aspects of sin in his hamartiology.

Man in Society

Devanandan brings out the important aspect of looking at man as a member of his society which aspect is lacking in Appasamy and Chenchiah. Though man is an individual and is responsible for his own acts, his role in the society is also important.³⁹ The scientific and technological changes in the independent India have brought about a different social order ; caste system loses its grip over the society ; till the 19th century man was counted only as a member of the group to which he belonged ; he had not much worth as an individual. But nationalism and industrialisation have altered such a rigid pattern of society.⁴⁰ Western education with its cultural values was increasingly becoming accepted. There is a shift of emphasis from God to man in neo-Hinduism.⁴¹

In this context mission or evangelism must be meaningful to society.

*God's redemptive work must radically affect human relations in society.*⁴²

The good news should change not only one group in the society but the whole creation.

So, Devanandan criticises the Hindu view of man in society because it clings to obsolete structures of society in the new India. Since India has changed to a democratic pattern of society, it can no longer hold, on the one hand, the age old caste structure which recognises unequal status of citizens because of their birth in a particular family and, on the other hand, the democratic structure which basically takes it for granted that all citizens are equal before the eyes of law. There cannot be two forms of administration for one and the same nation—one following aristocratic pattern (de facto) and the other a democratic one (de jure). So Devanandan wrote that in the neo-Hindu understanding of man in society

*The limitation would seem to be due to.....the unwillingness to totally discard out-worn social institutions because they have been hallowed by time and therefore need to be preserved in some way or another as being traditionally Hindu.*⁴³

However, it must be remembered that though Devanandan wishes that a Christian should live as a member of his society' he should be against communalism. Devanandan is nearer to socialism than to communalism. The difference between the two lies in the fact that while the former seeks the welfare of one group but not against any other group, the latter seeks the welfare of only one particular group as against others, based on caste, creed or colour. Therefore communalism and also pietism, i.e. the other worldly attitude and the tendency to separate the believers from 'world' must be avoided. The redeemed community is in no way superior to that of the other community. The redeemed should work together with others for the common goal of human life. Though there is the need for witnessing to those who do not yet know this new life, witness must not be separated from service for 'service is as much witness as our witness is service'.⁴⁴

This service for society is recognised by God, for it is God, Who ultimately, fights against the evils of the society. Therefore, Christians should be educated in the biblical understanding of God acting for mankind. Devanandan writes :

*In particular it would seem that earnest measures should be taken to explain to Christian folk the biblical basis for the Christian view of man in society, of the nature of social evil as something with which God is battling in Christ today, and that he is always at work in the redemption of individual men and women.*⁴⁵

Devanandan's view of man in society is summed up in the following sentences of his own :

*Man is truly man only in so far as he is found in the network of human relations which make what the Bible calls "people", and which in modern language we call "society". In Hindu thought also this is implied in such terms as jana (people) and jati (caste)*⁴⁶.

Man in God's Purpose

As a consequence of Devanandan's view of man-in-society, his view of soteriology is also influenced by individual and corporate aspects. When man became a sinner, he lost the genuine and true relationship with God ; this relationship is being restored in and through the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. Man becomes a new creation.

*Incarnation is the beginning of a new creation. This new life is offered to every man. The new world is already present here and now. The old order gives place to the new as world life becomes increasingly God-centered and, to that extent, less and less man-centered.*⁴⁷

Thus God's purpose for man is being fulfilled in and through Christ. This purpose of God must not be confined to individual conversions only but must be seen as a process.

When the Christian talks of being identified with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, he means to say that the believer steadily ceases to be the man that he had become by reason of his own self-righteousness, and that in fellowship with the living Christ he is being made over into the new being. That is why the Bible talks about 'being born again', of 'newness of Life' and of 'the hope of glory'.⁴⁸

Therefore when Devanandan talks about evangelism, he opines that it is not just a mission of God but has a four-fold aspect viz. '.....a cosmic process, a historic reality, a divine undertaking and a people's movement.'⁴⁹

Devanandan thinks that a person who has been redeemed by God cannot but affect his environment. His relationship with his society should show a marked change and reflect his spiritual new life in Christ. The good news must change the society-not only one society but the whole creation. The new life in Christ is not just for Christians but must convey meaning to the 'secular world too'.⁵⁰

Thus in the Indian context, Devanandan wants to talk about the evolution of a new concept of history. Since the concept of history in India gets the least importance, one has to formulate 'a new anthropology' based on God's purposive acts in and through human history.⁵¹

Devanandan stresses the fact that it is God Who is the author and finisher of the history of salvation. Although man acts in time, it is God Who perfects the history of man.

In one sense, Devanandan talks of a Christian living in two kingdoms, rather 'two worlds'. Man is citizen of two realms-a world of the relative things, Maya and a world of eternal Reality. Both find their meeting point in man. This very world, though being Maya is 'shot through with eternity'; here one witnesses 'the scene of human endeavour and the plane of Divine Activity'.⁵²

The Christian man thus works in time but lives for eternity. He is in bondage to self-seeking motives but by the grace of God is capable of living as a child of God who is constantly endeavouring to do his Father's will.⁵³

Naturally, therefore, Devanandan criticises the neo-Hindu view of man in society as limited in nature because it agrees to

*.....the understanding of all religious beliefs as some form or another of self-discipline (yoga) whereby man through his own efforts can achieve perfection.*⁵⁴

Devanandan reminds one of the necessity of the concept of grace because man is, in himself, not so good as to achieve perfection without the help of God. According to him, man can be a yogi, a self-disciplined person ; but this does not suffice because he shall be a bhakta. God is not to be conceived of as an abstract Reality but as a Person Who desires personal relationship. Devanandan's criticism against neo-Hindu view is that it persists in the 'principle of karma samsara' as a universal principle as against God as a Person.⁵⁵

In one sense Devanandan rejects Gnana marga because it does not give proper place to the 'reality of God's purposive work in world life as directed towards an End' and to the value of creation.⁵⁶

Man in Dialogue

Of all the contributions Devanandan has made in the field of Indian Christian theology, the concept of dialogue is the most important. He had made it clear why dialogue is important and also how it should be handled. It is true that Devanandan reacted against the theological liberalism of his days and thus accepted Barthian theology. But this does not mean that he accepted Barth's views in toto. In his view of revelation, specially, he rejected Barthian view and took sides with the 'Rethinking Group'. Devanandan digressed from Barth-Kraemer approach because their total negative attitude towards non-Christian religions made dialogue virtually impossible.⁵⁷ He writes :

*It is difficult to hold that all non-Christian faith is purely a human quest for God and that in all such "seeking" there is no "finding" or "being found".*⁵⁸

Boyd clearly brings out the shift in Devanandan from a study of God to a study of man. Commenting on Devanandan he writes :

*Barth and Kraemer, he feels, have stressed the fact that revelation is from God at the expense of the fact that it is to and for the world of man, and he himself feels called to restore the balance by making a detailed and sympathetic study of man and society in modern India.*⁵⁹

Devanandan feels that the Christians in India are as if in a ghetto and if at all they want to proclaim the Gospel, first of all they must become Indians, be accepted by Indians and then they can preach the Gospel. His main concern was : how can we, as Christians, live in India as brothers - concerned for one another - in society ? Can religion keep us away from our active participation in social problems ? Presenting the Gospel should not prevent a Christian from involving himself in the social functions with his non-Christian brethren.⁶⁰ Devanandan decries the negative attitude taken by Christians against Hindus and Hinduism-in not properly understanding them. He condemns false propaganda against Hinduism the withdrawal of the Christians into Christian communities and not involving in socio-cultural changes. He traces this attitude to the 'ignorance among Christians'.⁶⁵

It is very interesting to note that unlike Chenchiah and Appasamy who wanted to indigenise Christianity, Devanandan wanted to indigenise the Indian Christians and not the Gospel. He finds a greater danger in the situation that Indian Christians are not integrated into the society than in the fact that Christianity is not indigenised.

*How can we as Christian people become rooted in the soil ? That is the question. Not how to make Christianity indigenous. For it is clear that the faith of the Christian, which is centred in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, cannot be made indigenous to any one national culture. What should become part of the environment is not the Gospel but the people who are committed to the claims of that Gospel and who want to witness to the truth of it in that very environment of which they form part.*⁶²

Of course, Devanandan advocates that hymns and lyrics must be set in Indian form.⁶³ He recommends three important factors in the process of indigenisation :

1. Christians must become people of their land
2. The forms of worship, not its content, must be indigenisation :
3. Other living religions of the co-nationals must be accepted as having influence on people and thus Christians should enter into dialogue with them.⁶⁴ Devanandan finds that the cardinal virtues of Hinduism viz. Dharma, artha and kama (ethics, wealth and pleasure) are common features in all religions ; only the idea of the fourth virtue i.e. moksha (deliverance) is different in different religions.⁶⁵

Devanandan opines that before the Christian evangelist speaks to a Hindu, God acts in the Hindu. Therefore, for evangelisation, the method of dialogue is most fitting. Through dialogue, one can express his imago Dei which is renewed in him through the acts of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁶ True imago Dei reflects itself in a personal relationship of the bhakta with God and his neighbour alike. Devanandan goes to the extent of agreeing with S. Neill that God can open His treasures through any agent and from any direction.⁶⁷

According to Devanandan, the importance of dialogue increases because some concepts in Hinduism directly need a revision. Hinduism explains many concepts of religion but a new concept of man is lacking in Hinduism and it is in the making. Therefore Christian contribution can definitely enrich the new anthropology which is in formation in India and the Christians should make use of the possibility of dialogue in forming this 'new anthropology' for India.

Thus the responsibility of man for his action, and its consequent effect on his nature and destiny have given new importance to world-life and history, in Hindu thinking. Whether Hindus are conscious of this shift of emphasis or not, the fact remains that modern Hinduism is evolving a new conception of history. This has become inevitable in modern Hinduism, obviously because of a shift of religious interest, beginning with the nineteenth century, from speculation about the nature of man.

*In other words, the determinative doctrine in the evaluation of the Hindu outlook of life is no longer derived from its classical theology, but is being built upon a new anthropology. This anthropology is perhaps still in the making. Nevertheless, the primary question that is of dominant concern to the modern Hindu thinker is the nature and destiny of man-what is man and whither is he bound?*⁶⁷

Conclusion

It is clear that Devanandan has laid the foundation stone for a new Indian Christian anthropology. He has atleast turned the attention of the Indian theologians to the fact that the dire need of India lies in the field of anthropology rather than in other concepts like incarnation, grace, revelation etc. His view of man is also biblical in the sense that he wanted to deal with man as totus homo. He found that in the Indian background it is very important. The point of departure is seen in the view that while Chenchiah and Appasamy dealt with man as though man were just a spiritual being i.e. man as jiva, Devanandan announced the importance of considering man as sarira too;⁶⁸ i.e. Devanandan wanted to look at man as totus homo and not give importance just to his bodily or spiritual aspects.⁶⁹

Writing an essay on Devanandan's thoughts, Morton concludes that his contributions lie in the field of "theocentric humanism"; this clearly reveals that Devanandan was interested in both theology and anthropology; rather, he tried to form an Indian anthropology at the background of Christian theology.⁷⁰

Devanandan's method of indigenisation is very interesting. He wanted to indigenise the Indian Christians rather than Christianity; in doing so, he lavishly contributed to the development of the concepts of creation, history, community and dialogue. In his chapter on 'Man Whence and Whither', Devanandan seems to bridge the bhakti marga with the karma marga through his attempt on man-in relation to God and man-in-community.⁷¹

However, Devanandan could not bring his own anthropology to a fullfledged form. On man, he has written only a small chapter.⁷² He wrote a chapter on 'Man in Society according to Neo-Hinduism'.⁷³ And these two chapters, unfortunately, stand in different fields. His Christian concept of man is built on the biblical ground and does not take into account the anthropological structure according to neo-Hinduism. He uses only a few Indian terms in this chapter. His main interest was, of course, not to indigenise the Gospel but to indigenise the Christians in India, so that they become rooted in the nation. But his concept of man as explained in his article, cited above, does not sufficiently explain how an Indian Christian can be rooted in the nation.

Devanandan has made five criticism against the neo-Hindu view of man in society.⁷⁴ He could have mentioned one more, based on his anthropology that the concept of man in neo-Hindism is individualistic so far as it treats his redemption. In short, it could be said that Devanandan wrote more about a Christian man in his anthropology than on a pre-Christian man.

It is very clear that Devanandan has laid the foundation for an Indian Christian anthropology, but much remains to be built on the same.



CHAPTER V

NILES' ANTHROPOLOGY: EVANGELISTIC INVOLVEMENT

Life and Work

With Daniel Thambyrajah Niles, Indian Christian anthropology gets a new ray of light. He was born in Sri Lanka, the then Ceylon, at Tellipallai, Jafna, on the 4th May 1908. He belonged to the Tamil people who had settled down as minority in Sri Lanka. He had his theological studies in India in the United Theological College, Bangalore, like some of the other Tamil Ceylonese students. His services were rendered mainly to the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka; however he played a dominant role in the then East Asia Christian Conference and also in the World Council of Churches which honoured him as one of its presidents. He died at the age of 62 at the climax of his career.¹

Apart from the following six important books, Niles has written about 80 articles, sermons, booklets and pamphlets.²

1. That They may have *Life*, Harper and Brothers, Newyork, 1951 (German Translation: *Die Botschaft* fur die Welt, Kaiser, Munchen, 1960)
2. Reading the *Bible* Today, Lutterworth Press, London, 1956 (German Trans.: *Wie liest man die Bible heute?* Zwingli Verlag, Zurich, 1956)
3. Living with the *Gospel*, Lutterworth Press, London, 1957 (German Trans.: *Mit dem Evangelium leben*, Kassel, 1965).

4. *Upon the Earth*, C.L.S., Madras, 1963.
German Trans.: *Feuer auf Erden*, Ev. Missionsverlag, Stuttgart (1985).
5. *We Know in Part*, Lutterworth Press, London 1935.
6. *A Testament of Faith*, Epworth Press, London, 1972.
(posthumous publication with additional notes by his son).

Though Niles belongs to Sri Lanka, he is included in this study because of his valuable contribution to the field of Indian Christian Theology. In spite of his real concern for his Buddhist compatriots, his work among the Hindus was in no way inferior. Many of the illustrations from Hindu and Indian background which he has used in his books bear testimony to this.

In his foreward to Niles' book : *Upon the Earth*, Bishop Newbigin writes :

*Niles is an evangelist who is also a profound thinker, a theologian who can commend his saviour effectively to others.*³

Niles' theology is oriented towards evangelism. He is an evangelist, through and through. His writings are full of devotional, ecclesiastical and evangelical theology. Even when he writes a book on faith, basing the contents on the Apostles' Creed, he divides his chapters and sections in such a way that one could use it as a devotional book for daily reading.⁴ Niles is such an earnest and zealous evangelist that he thinks writing a systematic theology book is easier than writing a book on mission.⁵

Niles' way of using Scriptures

Of all the seven Indian theologians treated in this thesis, Niles is the one who wants to stick close to the scriptures in all his theological interpretations. There is no philosophical structure behind him except a thorough knowledge of the Bible.

In using the scriptures, Niles avoids two extremist positions present in India, namely the pietistic attitude most clearly to be found among sectarian groups and the ideological group. In giving high value and authority to the Bible, he is in line with the former but in

accepting a critical approach he supports the latter. Scripture is the word of God spoken to different men in different situations. It is wrong to spiritualize the Book to such an extent that it is torn out of its historical moorings and in the same way, it is not right to read the Bible so critically that one needs to formulate spiritual truths out of it. It must be read in full acknowledgement of the date, authorship etc., of the books, but through these experiences of the saints, the Holy Spirit will speak to the individual who reads it, though in a completely different age and circumstances. Niles wants to avoid, thus, both the pitfall of blind pietism and dry rationalism. His concept of man is not to restrict man just to a rational nature but to find both in man. Giving pure emotional content to the Bible by disregarding its historical context is as much wrong as denying the fact that the Holy Spirit can lead an individual through the Bible today. In this, one could see Niles from the view of bhakti but committed to consistent thinking.⁶

There can be no overwhelming miracle which puts reason to flight nor an appeal so overpowering that the will consents because it has been flushed out by emotion.⁷

Niles brings out the close connection between the Old Testament and New Testament as prophecy and fulfilment; thus the Old Testament is essential to a right understanding of the New Testament.⁸ It may be reminded that Chenchiah treated the Old Testament as unnecessary part of the scriptures.

In dealing with different texts of the Bible, Niles had brought out new and interesting meanings.⁹ It is interesting to note how Niles compares Israel with Jesus. Both come out of the promise of God, go to Egypt, go through water, are in the wilderness, started with good hope and ended in a tragedy but with a hope of glory.¹⁰

Niles gives the highest value to the Word of God without which no Christian, he says, can live. It is food for the believer; it is the way of life; it is a living Word.

The word of God is nourishment for the life of faith: the life of faith is called into being by the word of God.....I mean by this that, in the Bible, God Himself is speaking to us here and now.....The Bible is not simply a book about God; rather it is a place where God comes to meet us.¹¹

Niles does not bother to know which of Jesus' statements in the Gospel were genuinely spoken by Him or which not, but takes them as Jesus' words; in this he is in line with Barth. At the same time, in emphasising the fact that Jesus' words come alive again to the reader, he is more in line with Bultmann (hermeneutics) than with Barth. Thus Niles brings both Barth and Bultmann together in accepting the merits of both more conservative and existential trends. Appreciating Niles' knowledge of the Bible, Stephen Neil comments:

The reason is that the writer has for many years studied and pondered every part of the Bible, and the whole of it is present in his memory. His mind works very rapidly, and moves quickly from point to point.¹²

Nile's Theology

Niles takes it for granted that generally speaking a human being will have some belief or other in God. It is futile to try to prove the existence of God because man exists in God; man can have no life without God. With some philosophical tinge Niles says:

God is the ground of being, so that it is meaningless to speak about proving the existence of God. It is not possible to get outside God in such a way as to make Him an object of proof.¹³

Ofcourse Niles has little interest in philosophy: his theology is more practically oriented than speculative. Niles only demands an implicit faith in God but desires a belief in a Triune God-Father, Son and Spirit. His theology reflects a strong accent of the Nicene creed.

The main aspect in the concept of God is that God is sovereign. God rules the earth very graciously and without a flaw. Nothing can go wrong in the plan of God. Though man can't solve every theological quiz at present, time will reveal God's wise counsels, which He carries out through the church. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself' (II Cor. 5-17) and thus God has revealed what **humanum** is through Jesus Christ. He was the perfect Man and his obedience is what God wants from every man.

It is God who has the right to ask questions and not man. 'Answer my question' was the reply which Jesus always gave when He was questioned. The answer He gives to our questions depends on our answer to His. Indeed the central mystery of grace to which the Bible bears witness is this-that God has in Jesus Christ provided man with an answer to all his problems; but that man finds this answer only as he accepts as his own the answer that Jesus, as man, made to God. At the cross, we see man's perfect obedience, his complete answer, made in reply to God's demands; and at the cross we see also God's effective answer made to man in all his need. God first gives what He asks for, and then asks for what He gives.¹⁴

The last sentence in the above quotation is a replica of a famous saying in Augustine's confession. Niles is not far from Augustine or Luther in his conviction that man cannot overrule God's sovereignty. In spite of the fact that Niles does not believe in double predestination, but on the other hand stresses man's free will, he stands close to Luther who compared man to a horse ridden either by God or Satan.

God invades a man's life and he must either contend or surrender.¹⁵ God is always the first, the one who initiates and man can only respond to Him positively or negatively. God is very loving because He does not demand from man anything that He does not bestow him with.

*We must repent, **because** our sins have been forgiven. We must strive after holiness, **because** the kingdom has come into our midst. We must receive power to become children of God, **because** we are His children, claimed and redeemed by Jesus Christ. We must work for the unity of the Church, **because** the Church in God's purpose is already one.¹⁶*

Unlike many Indian Christian theologians, Niles wants to stress reality of the devil also. In spite of the fact that God is sovereign ruler, Niles emphasises the fact of the devil. According to him, the Gospel is a call to fight against the evil one. There is no question of the existence of the devil. He does exist. But the first thing he does is to make man believe as though he were not or the devil makes its appearance in such a good form that one scarcely recognises the devil's evil nature.

*The strength of evil lies in its incognito character.....The dynamism of evil lies in its ability to use the good and to appear as good.*¹⁷

So the Christian should bring to light the incognito devil that deceives many Adams or Eves, to be more precise.¹⁸

Niles makes Christology the decisive factor for his anthropology. The concept of man can be formulated only with a right concept of Christology. Repeating the Psalmist's question ; "What is man?", Niles replies that the answer is to be found in Jesus Christ (as it is found in Heb. 2:6-9).¹⁹ But Jesus, to him, is not just Man but more than man.²⁰

Jesus is both man and God. Either one accepts this fact or he rejects it. 'The Words of Jesus are Words of life.'²¹

*Man's discovery of God depends on his discovery of Jesus... Jesus is both God's question and God's answer to man.*²²

Niles gives the most importance, of all the seven Indian Christian theologians to the church. However, the period of this church begins with the Lord's death and ends with the Lord's second coming.²³

In his view of the Holy Spirit, Niles is close to Chakkarai. To both, it is not only true that 'no one comes to the Father but through the Son' but also the fact that no one comes to the Son but through the Holy Spirit. Both identify the Holy Spirit with the resurrected Christ.

Theology, according to Niles, is more than Christology ; to know Christ is not just enough ; the Christian has the experience of the Spirit.

*The Christian faith is more than a Jesus-religion. It is concerned with the consequence to men of who Jesus is.....The fact is that the possibility of Christian obedience is bound up with the experience of the Holy Spirit.*²⁴

Niles gives a high value to the scriptures, but the scriptures can be rightly understood only with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.²⁶ Since the Holy Spirit works for the formation of Christ in every man, sin against Jesus is forgivable but not sin against the Holy Spirit for He is the source of the formation of Christ in man.²⁷

However Niles does not agree with Chakkarai in one respect. He does not talk more of individuals having Holy Spirit as Chakkarai does, but the church as the Body that has the Holy Spirit.²⁸

Though Niles does not propound a very elaborated doctrine of the Trinity, it lies basic in all his theological writings.

*Jesus Christ is the Deed of God. Every action of God, anywhere performed, is in Him and unto Him. He works in the power of the Holy Spirit who is God continuously active in the world. He will consummate God's design.*²⁹

Niles' Anthropology :

Though Niles has a biblical-conservative approach, he also stresses the need for the new anthropology. He quotes Devanandan in this respect, who writes :

*This means that there is a new task awaiting the Christian church. The time has come to reckon with men and not simply talk about religious systems.*³⁰

This anthropology must, however, be derived from theology i.e. anthropology must be formed in the light of theology. Typical of Niles, he brings theological anthropology to expression through an excellent comparison. He compares God to light and says :

*There is no way in which light can be painted except as it is painted by the way it falls.*³¹

Light reveals the object : but where there is no object, light shines in vain. God and man are so closely bound with one another like light and object ; the one has no meaning without the other. Theology and anthropology stand in a certain relationship that one without the other can't make a meaningful picture. Man without God is as meaningless, as God without man remains unknown.

God is the Creator and man is the creature. Man can be man only in the light of his creator. Man can neither come to God nor know God by his own efforts since all men are sinners. As such, every man stands in the wrong direction. But God, because of His love and grace, meets man at His own initiative for which man does not and can not do anything; God's sovereignty is established in this act. Man is also sovereign to that extent that he can either accept or reject this offer of God, because man has a free will.³²

This offer of God to meet man, to be reconciled with him and to renew His fellowship with him is seen in sending His son Jesus Christ to redeem man, who is lost. The Holy Spirit makes this encounter of God possible and real in the life of man. Those who reject this offer of God are answerable to God in the day of judgement. But those who accept God are forgiven and are taken into fellowship with God. This happens through the church.

Accepting God's offer also means accepting God's Word as it is found in the Bible. This means that one is born again, born from above through the act of baptism. Though one is incorporated into the church which is the Body of Christ, this is not the end of his religious life. In fact it begins all anew. He has to go a long way to reach a perfect relationship with God. This new man may commit sin but it is only accidental and not deliberate.

The actual sin that such a person commits will no more be an expression of what that person is. It will be possible to speak of such a person as one who sins, but it will be impossible to speak of him as one that commits sin.³³

So this man in Christ must continue to believe in God and in Jesus Christ, Whom He has sent and the Holy Spirit, Who guides him. One should accept Christ, not only as One Who came to this world and died on the Cross but as his personal companion (Zeitgenosse) and surrender his will to Him.

Jesus asks for full possession. Can he have it? Will we allow it? We must. It is demanded by the sheer urgency of the world's situation, by our own predicament, and by the very tasks that await us.³⁴

In order to achieve such a life, one should live within the folds of the church; it may be any church but a church that stands in fellowship with each other i.e. an ecumenical church. Three things are very important, namely, baptism, following Jesus in His footsteps and proclaiming the Gospel to others because these three things are consequences of the Lord's death, the church and the Lord's return.³⁵ Such a life cannot be achieved unless one asks God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.³⁶

The Christian way of life may be lived in different ways within the church. At least there are 3 ways of living:

1. Some are interested in an 'earthly' life: they seek food, work, shelter etc. and pray for that. Some may be interested in an ascetic way of life, treating bodily needs as inferior. It is also possible that some may be interested in the magical and the occult way of life and pray God to bestow these powers on them. This level of religious life can also be seen among the non-Christians.
2. The Second type of religious life does not seek that which is earthly but that which is transcendental. They are interested in meditating and mystical experiences, like the experience of St. Paul in reaching the third heaven (2. Co. 12). Prayer for Holy Spirit is of special importance here.
3. The third way belongs to those who seek neither earthly values nor mystical values but that which belongs to God; they have no interest either in body or in soul put in God. It is only at this stage of intimate fellowship with God that one realises the burden of sin; man surrenders his will and himself completely to God and the end of this is pure enjoyment of God.³⁷

These three ways of religious life may be found in non-Christian religions too. Niles thinks that specially in the field of 'mysticism' all religions of this world find a meeting point. The only difference between Christianity and other religions lies in the fact that other religions hold man to be the subject of these three ways of religious life while Christianity sees God behind all these attempts. The measuring rod is Jesus Christ Himself, who being God, became man and showed what man should be. The church

is the continuation of the earthly life of Jesus until God brings His creation to completion. The only thing that man can do for this completion is to subject himself to the will of God. This stage can't be achieved by an individual but only corporately. The 'we' in the Lord's prayer points to this corporate nature. Therefore a good Christian is not just a mystic but a missionary. The Christian uniqueness is seen in living in the 'church of the Holy Spirit' which reflects the presence of Christ of the world.³⁸

Man may not reach perfection in this world at all. But with Paul he can say 'I keep going on, grasping evermore firmly that purpose for which Christ grasped me'. All these human acts will be judged by Christ at his return and then the consumation of God's Kingdom will have come, which the church enjoys in the power of the Holy Spirit right now.³⁹

Human life must be taken as a whole and not in divisions. Body and soul belong to each other.⁴⁰ Jesus treated man as he was-weak and rebellious. Nile's picture of man is based mostly on the Bible. According to him there are two types of men-man as he is in himself and man who recognises God's rule over him; the former stands in the wrong direction, fulfills the desires of his body, is a divided personality, a product of relations, one-sided, sick, does not know God, is lost, bound and does not accept his neighbour. But the other man stands in right direction towards God, trains his will, performs united actions, is stable, renews his whole being, is healthy, knows God, finds his home, is free, and has a good relation with his neighbour. Man by himself can't achieve this second position but Jesus fulfills it for him.⁴¹

Man has reason but it can't help him to understand his theology logically. Niles cites three places where human theology must stand aghast at the concepts of the Trinity, the sovereignty of God and universalism. Since these doctrines can't be "proved" biblically, they can never serve as premises of theological arguments but only as conclusions of other premises. Logically one may conclude that since God is sovereign, God will do what He wants i.e. even if an individual does not preach the Gospel, God would see that every one hears the Gospel; this may be logically correct but theologically it is absurd. Thus Niles brings out the limitations of human reason vividly.

Both the doctrines of the Trinity and of the sovereignty of God are doctrines which signalize the end and limitation of human reason in its thinking about God. They are resource for faith and not data for reason.⁴²

Bhakti influences

Though Niles does not advocate Bhakti as a Christian way of life openly as Appasamy has done, his theology is very close to it. According to him the laws of Jesus are ;

1. to praise God
2. to do the will of God
3. to keep himself always ready so that he is always His
4. to be true to God.⁴³ These reveal bhakti traits.

He expresses this theology sometimes in the form of a conversation between the believer and his Lord. e.g.

Jesus : Yes, you do. In fact, you by yourself cannot fulfil these teachings. But I will fulfil them for you and in you. Ask and it shall be given to you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you.⁴⁴

Bhakti marga always stresses such a kind of a union by which the believer can do more than what he can do by himself. Bhaktimarga also stresses more personal experience than confessional statements.⁴⁵ Bhakti emphasises belief over against work :

The opposite of faith in the New Testament is relying on works.⁴⁶

The sermon on the mount does not demand new works of love but a new relationship, a new union with Jesus Christ. Gandhi took it as a new code of law, a new programme ; but this is not a right understanding of the Sermon on the Mount.⁴⁷ No one can fulfil the ethical demands of the Sermon on the Mount except for the fact that he drives the power to do this by his request and fellowship with Jesus Christ. This new law is not intended for non-Christians who have not yet known Jesus Christ but it is intended only for Christians who have accepted Jesus Christ, who are baptised and are in the fellowship of the church.⁴⁸

*The sermon on the mount is not a new technique for achieving results, a new method of getting "there". It is just because it has been so adopted and interpreted by Gandhiji, as teaching a new technique and a new method, that the acceptance of Jesus as Lord still remains a problem in India. "Never mind plans and programmes", Jesus seems to say; "let us first get related to each other. It is you I am concerned with. I want to bind you to me with a new relationship-the relationship of a man who builds his life upon me. I do not guarantee results. Indeed, you will not escape the storms or floods of life. But I do say this-your house will not fall. Your relationship with me will not be destroyed. Nothing will separate me from you or you from me."*⁴⁹

Being a methodist Niles emphasises the responsibility of man. Sometimes he speaks only of surrendering oneself to God. With regard to the question of predestination, Niles always insists on the responsibility of man, his need to repent, his duty to follow Christ, although he accepts the sole sovereignty of God as a conclusion. Niles sees the doctrine of predestination behind the imperatives of God. God's commandments must be obeyed by man but this can be done only through the help of God.⁵⁰

Niles graphically portrays the inverse relationship between God's Will and man's will i.e. if God's will is asserted man's will must stand subdued and vice versa. According to him every assertion of man's freewill is an assertion of God emptying Himself (Kenosis), and every affirmation of man's freewill is a denial of the freewill of God.⁵¹

Bhakti is usually translated as devotion (Hingabe). Expressing this trait, Niles says :

*In surrendering myself to Him, I find myself unable to maintain a dignity and a freedom that is my own. Only in Him am I able to be free, only in Him am I able to maintain my position as a person.*⁵²

Man can find the meaning of life only by placing himself before God and hearing His Gospel. Neither Communism, nor Existentialism, nor Internationalism, nor religionism can help man to find the real peace and freedom he seeks.⁵³ Without this man **Coram Deo**, man's all good intentions could lead him to a pit.

*Concern for peace and order, enthusiasm for cult and culture, ardor for orthodoxy in religion and nationalism in politics, desire for the liberal way of life, passion for freedom from a foreign yoke-these found Jesus dangerous. So was Jesus crucified by a combine of every form of human good brought under the control of evil.*⁵⁴

Thus Niles rejects both the activists who try to bring the Kingdom of God on earth and also the religionists who endeavour towards a 'cosmic spirituality'.⁵⁵

However, Niles does not propound a Bhakti marga which abnegates the value of body thus leading to a passivistic approach. This trend in him shows now he has learned from the Bible and Western theology. Though he advocates prayer and mystical experiences as part of Christian life, prayer is not good if one avoids works in the name of prayer ; mysticism is not good if it keeps the person from involving himself in the world. It is not losing oneself in the presence of God but doing the Will of the Father as a child is important.⁵⁶ According to him, 'the heart of Christianity' is not concern for the soul but concern for the world.⁵⁷

Niles knows that onesided development in man is dangerous. Man needs, according to him, not only forgiveness and peace in soul but also bodily health.⁵⁸ Both deeds as well as words of love are essential.⁵⁹ Individual and corporate aspects are important. Though Niles usually talks of 'individual conversion', he also writes about the new creation in Christ and 'the hope of a healed community'.⁶⁰

God is not only the Creator but also the Redeemer for the 'whole man'.

*But in addition to this, God has provided in the life of the church the means of "wholeness" - Wholeness of the whole man, body and mind and soul.....The sick man is saved not just cured. He is made whole.*⁶¹

According to Niles there are three **Weltanschauungen** in India :

1. those who consider the world as evil i.e. those who recognise only those who belong to their faith or group and consider all others as of evil nature. They can also be called puritans because they think that cigarette, cinema, dance etc. can defile them.
2. those who consider the world as good ; only man defiles it by his wrong deeds. No thing or being is evil, and they all need to be loved. If we love God, we must love our neighbour.
3. those who hold the view that Christians are not of this world, though they are sent into it. God controls the events of the world and leads it to a destiny that He has fixed. God shows His mercy and judgement on races and peoples. Men ought to accept His ruling, be part of His church and proclaim His Gospel. Niles holds this view.⁶²

Commenting on the importance of looking at man as man **Coram Deo**, Niles writes :

*What makes man truly man is just that he is related to God as His "image". He lives by reflecting God, and God is perpetually at work on him, causing and bringing forth that reflection.*⁶³

Sin

Normal man, before he is confronted by God, stays in the wrong direction ; he is totally perverted ; he seeks that which is earthly and there is nothing in him that is 'from above'.⁶⁴ Such a view reminds one of Augustine's phrase 'massa damnata' to depict the nature of man.

*The Gospel is not lest men die but because they are dead.*⁶⁵

Niles, however, does not want to consider sin in a moral sense ; but sin is a religious term. Sin is to reject to meet God in the place where He comes to meet man.

*A sinner is one who is out of step with God. He is in the wrong place.*⁶⁶

He is righteous who stands **coram deo** and he is a sinner who rejects the presence of God. Reflecting Luther's concept of **incurvatus in se**, Niles writes :

*Basic to every problem of man is the nature of man himself; and it is in this area of man's thought about himself that sin has built its citadel. Let a man know himself as he truly is and the citadel is captured, the fight with sin henceforth is only on the outskirts of the soul.*⁶⁷

Commenting on the Tamil word for sin (Pawam) Niles says that 'pawam' stands for a pitiable person. But in the Christian sense, says Niles, not man but God is affected by sin and He comes to a pitiable position.⁶⁸ Man, by his sin, makes the sovereign God become pitiable; the cross reflects this situation. Thus unbelief in the God who loves man and comes to meet him becomes the terrible tragedy of sin.⁶⁹

Apart from this individual aspect of sin, Niles recognises the corporate aspect in sin too. The cause of crucifying Jesus Christ is not that a few were against Him but the whole structure was in such a way that each self-interested group like Sadducees, Pharisees and the Roman government played their role together in carrying out the death sentence on Jesus Christ.⁷⁰

The Church

Niles introduces the importance of corporate life in the religious field too which aspect is very much lacking in Hinduism. Niles rightly stresses the corporate nature of the church as an indispensable aspect. The aim of all proclamation is conversion. This conversion leads one to personal following of Jesus Christ and this in turn leads to proclamation. These three steps are very important in Christian life; one cannot be separated from the other. One can't come to heaven without entering the church; a good life is just not enough.⁷¹

To avoid over-mystical life, Niles says that the church is built on Trinitarian ground. The church arises out of God's call where Christ's sanctifying works are seen and is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.⁷²

Niles talks not more of the image of God in man but image of God in men i.e. the church.

*That image-relation is finally fulfilled in the new creation. The image of the divine "we" is in the human "we" created and gathered together in Jesus Christ.*⁷³

In this togetherness Niles finds the 'self-hood' of the church and not so much in the 'self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating'.⁷⁴

Holiness is a necessary aspect of the church. Holiness is attained through a chastisement of God; giving a kiss as a sign of love may not be unholy to some, but to others it may be queer.⁷⁵ Holiness is not to be reckoned with an individual but with the church as a whole. The church which is not missionary is not holy. Niles does not like the term 'nominal Christians'. If one wants to be a Christian and declares himself to be a Christian, he can't be dubbed as a nominal Christian inspite of his faults or weaknesses. So Christians who may be 'sinful' or even heretical should not be deprived of Christian fellowship.⁷⁶ Fellowship is also a connotation of the term "Catholic", a term given to the church in the Nicene creed. Niles translates this term "Catholic" with "whole", and expands its meaning. He talks of 'wholeness' of creation, of man and of the church. Unless the church receives this wholeness it cannot help the divided world. The church cannot be divided. Every problem is connected with another; solving one problem, in itself, releases another.

Therefore, unless 'wholeness' is aimed at, individual solutions remain only palliatives and not real cure.⁷⁷ This 'wholeness' includes not only the different churches but the whole world.

*Commitment to the Church's mission, therefore, must go hand in hand with the willingness to accept that that mission, as it is actually conducted, can be different from and in any case is smaller than the total mission in which God is engaged.*⁷⁸

The church is one; there may be different views theologically; that does not matter. But what matters is whether a church, inspite of its special accents, is willing to remain a part of the ecumenical church or not. A church that does not like to be in this fellowship is not a church but part of the 'world'.

The Church in its dividedness is not the Church but the world.⁷⁹ Niles thinks that unity is important not only for strength but also for right knowledge. Truth is no longer truth if it is in parts, e.g. 'priesthood of all believers' can be understood only at the background of the doctrine of the church and the sacraments. The ecumenical movement provides the possibility of looking at truth in unity. Thus truth is realised only in wholeness and not in isolation.

Unity is a condition of power, unity is also a condition of truth.⁸⁰ I have also wondered whether truths are true in isolation.⁸¹

Realising the havoc caused by the sectarian movements, who have no clear doctrines but flourish because of the disunity of the church, Niles appeals for the unity of all denominations.⁸² Niles appeals to the West to give more freedom to younger churches to develop indigenously. He does not like that the Lutherans remain a church of their own as Peter Brunner advocated,⁸³

Mission

Mission is not to be confined to only a few clergy or laity but it is the task of every Christian.

All Christians must face the question "why not be a missionary?" because to be a Christian is to be a member of missionary community and to become a participant in the activity of a missionary God.⁸⁴

Through the proclamation of the Gospel, God established His fellowship with men, reveals Himself to men creates people to be His instrument and thus shapes His kingdom.⁸⁵

But mission should not be the projection of the missionary. The interest of the missionary should be nothing but the presentation of the Gospel. That Gospel makes man meet God directly without setting the missionary in between God and him as a mediator or helper.

Somehow we find it difficult to communicate the fact that we ourselves are captives of the Gospel, and that our evangelism is a showing forth of our captor-Lord.⁸⁶

Therefore presenting one's doctrine or culture and not the pure Gospel is not evangelism but proselytism.⁸⁷ Evangelism is not to tell other persons that their concept of God is inferior but to live a Christian life in such a way that the others are attracted towards this way of life.

Evangelism is an overflow of the Church's life not a mere program of activities.⁸⁸

The Gospel is one ; therefore one can cross frontiers and cultures to go to another nation to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But this means that the missionary will become part of the people where he works and 'belong' to them. So Niles denied the idea that he was already a missionary to the Americans, because he was preaching in USA for some time.⁸⁹

Every man has his own home geographically and mentally. Therefore there are many homes in the world. It is the task of the missionary to breakdown the walls that separate these homes through the Gospel of Christ and make the possibility for 'one household of faith'.⁹⁰

Indigenisation

Though Niles has not attempted to indigenise Christianity like Chenchiah, Chakkarai or Appasamy, he recognises the importance of indigenisation as a necessary aspect. His basic view is :

The Christian message cannot be grafted upon other beliefs or added to them. There is only one way in which the Christian message can be accepted and that is by a radical conversion to it, so radical that the New Testament speaks of it as a new birth, the coming into being of a new creation, a dying and a living again.⁹¹

However, Niles accepts that a Hindu convert might have 'psychological' but not 'religious' influences of his old religion.⁹² Niles claims that Christianity is eastern in the geographical, political

and ecclesiastical sense ; nevertheless, he says, most of the eastern nations have received Christianity through western mission. Therefore indigenisation is necessary.

Indigenous theological thinking is receiving great impetus.

Indigenisation of the church is an accepted goal everywhere.⁹³

Though no one has the power to change the message of the Gospel one should be able to distinguish the Gospel and the culture. Niles illustrates this through an example. The seed (Gospel) falls on earth (man's heart) and grows into a plant (religion). It becomes a tree, bears fruit through which it spreads its seeds once again.

The Gospel is seed which, when it is sown in the soil of a country's life, brings forth a plant. The plant is Christianity. It bears the marks both of the seed and of the soil. There is only one Gospel, but there are many Christianities, many cultural forms in which men express their Christian faith. It is inevitable that the missionary should bring a pot plant, the Christianity of his own culture ; it is essential that he allows the pot to be broken and the plant to be rooted in the soil of the country to which he goes.⁹⁴

Niles also speaks of the method of proclaiming the truth, it is essential that the audience is ready to hear the truth. One who sells a shoe polish in a religious festival or one who tells the truths of geography in a street corner may not be welcome.⁹⁵

We can hear the Gospel and obey it only in relation to the geographical, linguistic, social and general cultural realities which comprise our own world.⁹⁶

Niles thinks that in the Indian situation, one should not give importance to confessional statements, because sectarian groups are able to flourish because they don't burden the people with doctrines. According to him many of the Indian churches still are dependent on western churches for financial support and missionary personnel. Niles pleads that the western Mission supports the younger churches to make their own decisions and hand over the leadership of these younger churches to themselves.⁹⁷

He also decries the import of existentialist ideas because they sound very Hindu ; because one can't know exactly the Jesus of History, the personal life of a Christian can't be made the criterion of belief. Niles does not like that such a view comes from the west, which had once brought the good news of Jesus Christ.⁹⁸

Niles feels that the west is still holding the power-base for Christian churches in the east. The reasons given are :

1. West means Christian ; whether a white man is a Christian or not, he is a missionary in the eyes of an Eastener.
2. Western culture is closely connected with Christianity. Niles opines that democracy has its root in the Bible and Christianity. But then he questions whether democratic values can be different in Europe and Asia or Africa. He wants to maintain the same democratic principles in Asia, Europe and Africa.⁹⁹

Niles admonishes the west to help the younger churches not to lose the 'family unit' as it has happened in the case of western working class people because of industrialisation.

*.....my plea is that the churches of the west have a radical discovery to make in their homelands, the discovery of how to preserve the family unit within a Christian congregational life which itself is based not on the family but on the social unities of modern man. Until this discovery is made in the west where Christianity is still the dominant religion, the missionary enterprise must remain seriously handicapped.*¹⁰⁰

Relationship between a Christian man and a Non-Christian man

The main difference between a Christian and a Hindu is that the latter worships Jesus Christ as his **Ishta Devada** (personal God) because he has chosen Him while the former knows that he is chosen by Him. If religion does not begin with God, it is not worth its name.¹⁰¹ According to Niles the **imago Dei** is not confined only to the Christians but to the Non-Christians also because 'God created man in His image'. Further it is not an event in creation only. It means the assurance of God to be with

every human being. Man has not lost this image totally. It is distorted but still exists as an image. Therefore every man—whether Christian or Hindu—reflects God. This is also the reason why there are so many religions. But Jesus Christ alone sets this distorted image into a right one.¹⁰²

*That man is made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27) is not simply a once-for-all event. It is the promise that God will be with each man whom He has made, so that each man may have the image-relation fulfilled in his life, so that each man may live the life of response to God. The "Imago Dei" is God's foundation-covenant with man.*¹⁰³

Therefore, in evangelism one should not preach the Gospel to a Hindu but to a man. Quoting C.F. Andrews, Niles opines :

*You have to get within the Hindu until Hinduism becomes your context, and when you have got there, in that situation you do not meet the Hindu but the man. You are then able to preach the Gospel to the man and not to the Hindu in him.*¹⁰⁴

Niles does not write a theology of religions but he prays for a Hindu when he is invited to do so. He has shown that the barriers among religions disappear at the last mile stone of man's life.¹⁰⁵

According to Niles, there are no 'children of Abraham' who are born as such ; everyman a Christian as well as a non-Christian-stands in need of conversion and must surrender his will to God.¹⁰⁶ The people of Israel also are in no way specially privileged ; every other nation or race can and is in the same position.

*Yes, it is ; for Scripture itself, makes clear that what God did for Israel He did on behalf of all men, since to all of them Israel was sent as His messenger ; that what God expected of Israel He expected of all men who were invited to share with Israel the honour of His kingdom.*¹⁰⁷

Jesus loved all people not only one group : Jews and Samaritans, the healthy and the sick, the sinner and the saint, the poor and the rich, the educated and the uneducated.¹⁰⁸

This does not mean that one could accept the faith of other religions. Criticising the Karma concept, Niles says that a Christian who believes in God needs reap not only what he sows but also that which God in Christ has sown.¹⁰⁹

Quoting Visser't Hooft, who says that 'syncretism is the secret religion of many intellectuals in the West', Niles warns against the dangers of syncretism.

*A quality of a true thinker is his intellectual humility, but in the realm of religion this humility can prevent one from committing one's life to personal discipleship to Jesus Christ. A syncretist can be committed to great causes but, within the inner citadel, the God he worships is a God he has chosen and not a God who has chosen him.*¹¹⁰

There is only one God and He is the Father of the employer and the employee, the white and the coloured, the great powers and the small powers.¹¹¹

Eschatology

Niles believes in a happy end for mankind because there is God, Who will accomplish everything that He has planned for man. Niles does not believe in a process whereby the human history is moving towards the end because history in itself has nothing to contribute to this end. Man should do only what God in Christ has told him to do and God will bring the end. Neither can man by his own efforts establish God's kingdom on earth. Thus Niles does not think on the lines of either Chenchiah (Process-Gnana marga) or M. M. Thomas (Karma marga). But this end of human history is not a mere speculation or a dream that man has; it is real and has become real; it has already started in Jesus Christ. Thus Niles contributes to the concept of realised eschatology.¹¹² Niles expects 'one humanity' at the end.¹¹³

Except God brings this end, mankind has no hope, it will only deteriorate. Depicting the future of humanity, Niles does not portray an optimistic picture. He compares the churches in Europe

to the Remnants; Africa has racial contradictions between the Whites and the Blacks; this is like new wine being poured into old wineskins. America looks only like a patchwork of different kinds of old and new cloths. With regard to East Asia he says :

*The older churches in the West are the ass and the younger churches in Asia are the colt of the ass on which the Lord comes.*¹¹⁴

However, there is only one hope for man in the future, i.e. to wait for the Lord's Second coming because He is the goal and the future for man. In this, the church must fulfil its task.

Like the old Israel, the church has a mission. Its mission is to bring everyone within the folds of the church, 'until the Kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ'. In this, according to Niles, the church itself becomes the goals of the mission.¹¹⁵

Evaluation

Niles deals with man more as a spiritual being who has the body for spiritual ends. He speaks of man as God's creation, fallen into sin, in need of repentance, gets salvation through the free gift of God in Jesus Christ, by believing in Him, must live a Christian life in full obedience to God's Word which he can understand through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The whole life of a Christian is lived in the Church which is God's mission for the world. Niles has written very little on the impacts of modern science and technology, political structures and economic growth on man which M. M. Thomas attempts to do.

*It is not enough to spread the theological butter on political bread. It is necessary that men who are asking the Church to prove to them that God is relevant should be bidden by the Church first to become themselves relevant to God.*¹¹⁶

To devalue the secular aspect of man is a usual trap for everyone who wants to follow the Bhakti Marga; but Bhakti marga never constrains anyone to exclude right deeds. This can be seen in the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi. Though M. M. Thomas tries

to establish that Gandhi was a Karma Yogi, it is clear that his karma marga stems from his bhakti; otherwise he would not have followed the way of ahimsa in the independence struggle, but a violent method like Bose. A theology of the cross lies closer to the Bhakti marga than to the Karma marga. That Jesus Christ gave Himself up to be crucified on the cross without trying to protest does not mean that He was always passive; He had launched a great fight against the self-interested groups of the Pharisees and the Sadducees to that extent that E. Kasemann calls Him a 'liberal'.¹¹⁷ The dialectic between **theologia gloriae** and **Theologia crucis** always exists as in Luther's time, so now; but the deciding factor should be the question: what is the basis of what? The answer is clear: Not **theologia gloriae** but **theologia crucis** is the basis of **theologia gloriae**. God's love is the basis of His justice and not vice versa. Bhakti marga should be the basis of Karma marga i.e. faith should be the basis of work and not vice versa. Gnana marga feels too high or too strong to be involved in the petty political struggles; its concept of sin is its weakest point i.e., it considers sin only as ignorance. The Bible clearly shows that it is not because man does not know the good that he does not do it but in spite of knowing the good, he is against it (Romans 7). Gnana Marga also belongs to **theologia gloriae**; it must, therefore, be reformulated on the basis of Bhakti.

Oosthuizen's criticism of Niles in this respect is certainly unfounded. He writes:

*Truth in its absolute sense, says Niles, can only be acquired when absolute goodness is attained, because goodness is not impersonal, it leads to the personal God who is both truth and goodness. Denying God leads to relativism in truth and to an utilitarian rather than principally based ethics. One may agree with Niles in this but what about those who know the way and are disloyal to it. They know the truth without goodness. Here, his norm of religious experience is found lacking again.*¹¹⁸

His attitude towards Hinduism was also negative and obsolete. He wrote:

*We may however add that Hinduism cannot be corrected, it cannot be fulfilled, it must be judged.*¹¹⁹

Niles shows five different ways of treating other religions :

1. to hold that Christianity is the only true revelation ; all others are of human origin.
2. that Christianity is the crown of all religions.
3. to accept the possibility of sincere religious life in other religions and present Jesus Christ through dialogue.
4. to treat all religions as of equal value and to present the Gospel of Christ over against all religions.
5. to present only Jesus Christ so that He works in the non-Christians, in their religions and thus finally 'a new religion in which all religions, including Christianity, will be comprehended'.¹²⁰

Niles gives an exalted position to the church. This is a bit dangerous. The fact that the church always stands in need of reformation, that it can be carried away by human enthusiasm, the fact of its fallibility must have found their necessary stress. The reason for this is that Niles discusses more of the functional nature of the church and leaves out its ontological nature ; he does not emphasise the invisible nature of the church. To him all those who are enrolled in the registers of the 'ecumenical' churches, are Christians. This idea is too superficial. On the other hand, when discussing the 'holy' nature of the church, Niles does not bring out its functional value ; the church is not holy ontologically but only functionally : The church is holy not because of itself or its deeds but because of its relationship with God.

To Niles following Jesus Christ seems a simple decision because he does not bother about its ideological differences with which Thomas struggles with.

Niles advocates indigenisation of missions in the following ways in his book : 'Upon the Earth' :

1. to replace foreign funds with native service (p. 181)
2. to avoid competition among foreign missions (p. 163)
3. not to attach strings with financial aids (p. 163)

4. that mission Boards do not control internal affairs (p. 151)
5. to reduce missionaries by stages (p. 151)
6. to encourage formation of indigenous missions (p. 187)

Niles, thus, thinks of indigenisation mainly in matters of administration and not in formulations of doctrine. He rejects Existentialism not only because it devalues the Jesus of History but because it goes along with Hinduism.¹²¹ This is actually not indigenisation. He could have rather made use of this in the Indian context where history does not get an important place. Niles writes :

*At a recent consultation held in India between Hindu and Christian scholars, one of the Hindus remarked that if ever he felt compelled take history seriously, he would then have to become a Christian.*¹²²

It is one thing to reject Existentialism because it devalues history and it is another thing to make use of Existentialism because it is indigenous and then to emphasise the historical aspects of Christianity too.

Conclusion

Some one has rightly said, " we are at the end of the second enlightenment period". The first enlightenment brought reason to the forefront and made man as the measure of all things.

The second brought science and technology to the fore. But today one comes to know better that neither reason nor science can replace faith. Man is essentially a psychosomatic being. Modern psychology has discovered very many new aspects in man, so also modern physiology. But still the puzzles of man have not been solved. Man is still a question to himself. Of course subjective research is bound to bring out wrong conclusions also.

Man can realise himself only as man **coram Deo** ; only in the sight of the God-Man, he can find his self in the right perspective. Niles tries to reveal the nature of man, who must stand **coram Deo** ; all other men are in the wrong direction. Niles attempts this from the

background of Bhakti marga, though he does not explicitly make a structure out of it; to him the Bible is the ground, basis and decisive factor. His method of using illustrations, pictures and allegories is a common factor in the bhakti tradition. [cf. Sadhu Sundar Singh. Appasamy, Krishna Pillai] His emphasis on personal conversion, being related to God, following His footsteps etc. confirm this direction. He does not see indigenisation as the main point as Chakkarai has done; he is interested in God's way of dealing with man as found in the Bible and this he explains wherever possible, through indigenous ideas. This is the right approach. Sometimes he expounds the Christian way of life without knowing that he is thinking indigenously, e.g. in his interpretation of the three ways of Christian life: Niles is propounding a way of life on the pattern of Hindu dharma.¹²³ Hinduism talks of four stages of life: Brahmacharya, Grahastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. Niles's three ways of life just brings the first two stages of life into one; otherwise his description fits into the Hindu interpretation squarely.

Niles does not bring out the individual aspect of man as much as Thomas has done. Thomas talks of the 'self-hood' of man; Niles talks of the 'self-hood' of the Church. Niles does not lose sight of the corporate aspect in man but only shifts the emphasis from personal religion to the social aspect. He talks of personal conversion, personal faith in Christ but switches over to corporate responsibility of the Church as a whole with regard to the mission, and social involvement.

The eastern way of understanding man is shaped to a large extent in considering man not as an individual but as a part of his society [family, caste, village or group] in the realm of social thinking but considers the separate individuality of man with respect to his religion. In Indian society each one stands in relation to the other: father-mother-children. The family unit is stronger.¹²⁴ The support of the weaker members e.g. widows, handicapped, unemployed etc. is not the burden of the government as such but of these closer units. The Indian child does not receive as much social freedom as a child in Europe. It has no separate room, does not usually develop its interests but it is guided by the parents and its society in learning, living and choosing a subject, a job and even in marriage. Even

after marriage the couple lives dependent on its society or family; this makes the caste play a greater role. Joint-family system has not totally broken down, although it is on its way, mainly because of the industrial developments. The best way to abolish caste system is industrialisation; but it is not easy because India primarily remains an agri-cultural land. More than 70% of the population still live on lands.

But in the matter of religion individualism is highly respected. The Hindu system has avoided common worship (because of caste problems) and there is no concept of congregation. Spiritual life is left to the individual. This may be due to the influence of the concept of Karma. What one has sown in his previous birth, he has to reap all alone. Therefore the way of worship is also turned according to it. There are not common sermons but personal religious advices from gurus to sishyas. Religious songs play a dominant role but it is usually done by individuals; choirs are unfamiliar. However a type of common singing (bajan) is developing. Worship is conducted usually in every home; those who can afford to allot one room in their house as a small chapel-room, do so. The religious development through meditations, tapas, yoga also make religion individualistic. Thus man lives and finds himself in a corporate atmosphere socially and takes his liberty to develop his individualism in the religious field.

Indian Christian theology has had no systematic approach till now. Some Indian theologians question whether such a systematisation is necessary at all.¹²⁵ Each theologian has tried to look at man from a different angle. (Chenchiah-man in process: Appasamy-man as a spiritual being; Devanandan-man in dialogue; Thomas-man in society; Niles-man in Church). Appasamy and Niles belong to the bhakti marga; Devanandan and Thomas belong to Karma marga; Chenchiah is for Gnana marga. It is unfortunate that the field still lies for the Lutherans vacant; a lutheran understanding of faith could make great contribution to the Indian Christian theology in understanding man from the background of bhakti marga.

CHAPTER VI

CHANDRAN'S ANTHROPOLOGY : SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT

Life and Work

Joshua Russel Chandran was born in 1918 to Christian parents in the border-region of Kerala and Tamilnadu. He is the principal of the United Theological College, Bangalore. His sixtieth birthday [Sashtiabthapoorthy] was celebrated in 1978 with a 'Festschrift'.

As a brahmacharya, Chandran was actually interested in Mathematics and obtained a post-graduate degree [M. A.] in that field. But then a change happened; he chose theology, rather he wanted to serve Christ, through the church. He entered the activities of the church as a probationer in the Kodankarai pastorate. Then he joined the theological college in Bangalore, to study theology. After the successful completion of the course, he worked again in a parish called Irenipuram.

He took up his higher studies in theology in England [1947-49] and in the USA [1949-50 and 57-58]. During his study period in England he wrote a dissertation on: "A comparison of the pagan apologetic of Celsus, against Christianity as contained in Origen's contra Celsum and Neo-Hindu attitude to Christianity as represented in the works of Vivekananda". The Serampore University honoured him with an honorary doctoral degree in 1962.

He began, however, teaching in the United Theological College from 1950. In 1954 he became the principal in which post he continues to work. He had offered many courses in the USA as visiting professor. He has served as the vice-chairman of the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches too.

Chandran's activities are not to be confined within the church or in the theological college only. His real interests lie in the fields of ethics, sociology, economics and politics. He is the founder and president of the Christian Union of India, a political association. He had been the president of the Asian Christian Peace Conference and the Christian Union of India and the Ecumenical Association of the Third World Theologians. The churches of India, specially the Church of South India (C.S.I.) have benefited by his works. His interest in the church union talks with Lutherans and the Orthodox churches deserves mention.

His literary works are listed in the Festschrift.¹

Apart from the following two books, he has written about 110 articles in different magazines and books and had been the co-editor of 4 books.²

1. Christian Ethics, C.L.S., Madras, 1964 (in Tamil)³
2. Following Jesus, C.L.S., Madras, 1969.

His Anthropology

Chandran wants to have the Bible as the basis for Christian theology and therefore, for his anthropology too. However, he has to repudiate the extreme ways of using the Bible for selfish purposes. He rejects, therefore, 'Biblical literalism' and 'Proof-Text Approach'. The Bible is a Book which belongs to history. God has revealed His Will to His men in different situations. So, the O.T. and N.T. writers also 'have their peculiar emphasis'.⁴

The Bible depicts the way of salvation to man. This way does not consist in following certain laws (ethical), but it is a way of relationship; it is a relationship *marga*. Man is man only because of his relationship with others and with God. God Himself exists in relation; He is triune. Therefore, man's valid existence depends on his ability to stand related to others.

*The meaning of salvation is not the ability to do good. Its basic meaning is to be reconciled to God. Therefore salvation stands for right relationship with God.*⁵

Chandran deducts the nature of man from his relationship with God.

The nature of man and the purpose of his life can be known only on the basis of his relationship with God. In fact, his very existence as man depends on his relationship with God.⁶

Thus man's nature is good or bad depending on whether he is related to God or not. This idea runs parallel to the idea that if the vine is good its branches also will be good.

God is the source of all good gifts. The earth belongs to Him. He gives intellect to man and therefore much of the modern technical and scientific advancement is also a gift of God, though it is not a direct gift from God.⁷ Man can enjoy all good things that God has bestowed. In reality nothing belongs to man but to God. Man shall make use of them in so far as it is not contrary to the love of God. God's special gift to man is the gift of His Image. God's image denotes God's freedom and God has given this freedom to man too. But man does not get this freedom naturally; it shows the purpose of the creation and only in Jesus Christ it becomes clear.⁸ Thus man is totally dependent on God for all his spiritual, intellectual and material possessions. When man rejects God, it only shows his ungratefulness in receiving the gifts and not recognising the Giver.

Chandran's anthropology is Christologically based and also dialectical in nature. He always connects the spiritual belief of man in God and Christ with man's involvement in the material world. The meaning of 'spiritual life' is to be seen through proper action in the material world.

Believing in the God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ does mean taking a stand for a righteousness, peace, and justice in human affairs that would lead to a certain polarization.⁸

This polarisation is not to be set between Christians and non-Christians but those who treat man as man and those who enslave man, thus, depriving him of his dignity. He who believes in God should also believe in Jesus Christ, Who is the revelation of God,

A belief that Christ died for us is not enough; what is more important is the 'reality of Christ', that He is risen and exists today. Faith in Christ becomes an experience of the believer. Faith is not giving an intellectual assent to a set of doctrinal statements but real faith reflects itself in the day-to-day affairs of man. Thus the believer cannot escape from a fight for justice.

But the main key to Indian theology is the discernment of the reality of Christ and his mission on frontiers of the church both with other faiths and with the struggle for justice. What is important for Indian theology is not just the form in which different doctrinal formulations are made about God, Christ, Holy Spirit, the church, the sacraments, salvation, Christian hope, and the like. It is true that doctrinal formulations have helped the understanding of the faith and its communication to those within the church as well as to those outside. But the basic fact for Christians is not the possession of these doctrines or the institutions and sacraments of the church interpreted by these doctrines. The basic fact for Christians is the reality of Christ whom they confess as the risen Lord.¹⁰

Chandran does not lean on empty bhakti (i.e. accepting reality of Christ but acting in an 'other-worldly' way) or on strong but wrong Karma marga (i.e. attitude to take justice in one's hands and be jealous to execute it in the Name of God) but he brings these two poles together. Since these two poles seemingly stand in contrast to each other, an intrinsic connection between them tries to do away with the demerits and thus produce a harmonious upbuild of spiritual life. He writes :

In other words, true theology is not just a process of formulation of doctrines, but a process of doing, a process of participation in the real presence of Christ with two poles, one the sacramental participation and the other a contemporary re-enactment of the exodus-covenant experience for people suffering from different forms of oppression.¹¹

This above statement of Chandran can be taken as his central idea for his anthropology-a 'sacramental participation' as a memorial

act and an active involvement in the present situation. His dialectical approach, thus, runs through his concepts of love and law, freedom and responsibility, sacred and secular, justice with love, dialogue with commitment.¹²

However there may be difficult situations where a Christian's loyalty may come into conflict. Chandran classifies a Christian's loyalty in the order of priority: a Christian's loyalty is first and foremost to Christ and then to the nation and thirdly to the cause of 'the oppressed, the victims of injustice and exploitation'.¹³

Economics

Among the Indian Christian theologians who are dealt with, Chandran brings out the impact of economics on man's life very clearly. According to him, though 'man does not live by bread alone' yet he does not live without it also.¹⁴ In his book 'Christian Ethics' he explicates the economic circumstances which drive man to take to peculiar ways of life. He cites the example of a lady who, being driven by poverty, takes to an unethical way of life. He deduces the sources of some ethical problems to economic problems like dowry, class differences etc. He finds a great meaning in the sharing of not only spiritual things but material things also among church members. He cannot understand how one member of the church can possess great wealth while others in his own congregation are direly in need. Sharing of property may look like a 'kind of communism' but Chandran knows that it is New Testament teaching. According to him God does not deal with man only in spiritual matters: "The earth is the Lord's." (Lev. 25:23)

Poverty is a result of sin; but to Chandran wrong economic policy also is a result of sin and the cause of poverty. Christians are, therefore, called not only to come away from sin but also fight for a just economic policy.

*Therefore, a Christian has to show interest in economic policies, thus creating a just economic policy.*¹⁵

During the emergency period in India many wanted more freedom. Though Chandran also desired more freedom of the Press, he also

found that without economic freedom, freedom of the Press is of little value. He wrote :

It is not a thing to be lightly taken that nearly 250 million people of India below the poverty line, and liberal democratic values like press freedom, rights of opposition etc. mean nothing for them until they have been liberated from unemployment, poverty and hunger.¹⁸

Making use of Thomas phrase, he demands that man be treated not as an 'object' but as a 'subject'.

If theology is to be relevant, it will arise from contextual situations. Indian theology will be irrelevant if it connives at the poverty of millions of people. First every man in India must have his daily meal, then he can hear or understand the Gospel.

In India too, theology should be related to the Indian people's struggle for justice. While we can learn much from the theology developed in other parts of the world, we should not allow ourselves to be pre-occupied by the theological concerns of the West. Nor should we allow exaggerated emphasis on certain interpretations of sin and salvation which keep people pre-occupied with peripheral concerns and, consequently, unable to relate their faith to the real issues of life. In India the struggle for justice is a very complex one. But the most important dimension of the struggle is the economic one.¹⁹

Therefore, he finds little value for theologies imported from the west because they do not cater for the needs of the Indian situation. He repudiates the assumptions of the theological Conference at Poona in 1942 and of the Faculty of Gurukul Lutheran Theological College 'that the essential content of Christian faith is the same for all times, places and circumstances and that there can be fixed criteria of orthodoxy'. What remains universal is the reality of God in Christ. Each separate context in which that reality is to be witnessed calls for a separate theological reflection.²⁰ However Chandran advocates for a systematic approach for theological thinking; he is probably the first Indian theologian to recognise the need for a systematic theology.²⁰

Ethics

Chandran sees man not only as a being whose actions are determined by economic conditions, but he sees him as a moral being too. Man has conscience; it is of two kinds. Every man, whether Christian or not has a conscience in general which convinces him of right or wrong. One may equate it with human reason too. But there is another type of conscience which every one gets when he comes into relationship with Christ. The 'general conscience' which every one possesses may decide wrongly but the Christian conscience cleansed by the blood and deeds of Christ' [Rom. 9,1; II Cor. 1, 12] is not to be equated with human reason it develops because of the believer's relation to Christ and because of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. ²¹

The aim of Christian ethics is not to give a set of codes for the conduct of life; at least this is not the aim of Jesus or Paul. Christian ethics is unlike the ethics of other religions. It is not a law or demand of God, Who stands outside man; it, rather, stems from the inside, where Christ and the Holy Spirit live, thus not only demanding from man what he cannot fulfil but giving to man the strength to perform what is demanded. So Chandran can equate Christian ethics with the fruits of the Spirit. Therefore he who has not experienced in himself the salvation offered by Christ cannot understand Christian ethics.

Man knows the aim of his life only through the living Spirit, Who dwells in him and Who guides him.

*It is God's work that we know the purpose of God for us. Only the grace of God and His grant of the Holy Spirit can make us men realise our nature and what we should do.*²²

Thus the question: What is man?, cannot be answered correctly unless and until one is in Christ, guided by the indwelling Holy Spirit. So Chandran rules out a proper understanding of anthropology either from a philosophical or secular or sociological point of view or even from a non-Christian religious point of view. A knowledge of the Bible and a direct relationship with God alone can lead man to a right understanding of his ethical codes.²³

It may be very difficult for man to take right decisions especially in circumstances which are complicated e.g. using Black Market to feed the hungry ones or taking to 'underground' methods for establishing justice. God's 'absolute demands', however, shall not be abrogated for any reason but the '**adiaphora**' give possibilities for taking personal decisions. Man shall know that he is a sinner inspite of all his good intentions.²⁴

Sin

The word sin is not an ethical term but a theological one. Sin means breaking the relationship with God.²⁵ Chandran classifies sin as bodily and spiritual. Original sin means that 'everyman is a sinner' and that 'every part of man is affected by sin'. Therefore the seeming good deeds of men are also corrupted by sin.²⁶

Society

Man lives in a particular society; he is born and brought up in a particular religion in the world with certain special customs, through a definite language etc. He develops biased opinions, therefore, against all other practices and customs which are alien to him. Thus, normally he does not know that humanity is one. The group, class, caste and denominational ties are stronger than the truth that man's neighbour is not only his relative but everyone whom he sees in need of help. Even many of the Christians in India do not find their unity in Christ but in their denominational distinctions. But a Christian should live in such a way crossing the boundaries of caste and confessional differences. This should be seen in elections and marriages too. However Chandran thinks that it is better to forget the caste orders than to fight against it.²⁷

Social customs shall not separate Christians from non-Christians; Christians should not identify themselves in all these practices. So a Christian lady cannot establish her Christian identity by removing the pottu (dot) from her forehead; it is only the fruits of the Spirit that makes her a Christian; so also with festivals. A Christian can celebrate Deepali or Pooja or Pongal together with his non-Christian neighbours by affirming the lordship of Christ over the world.²⁸

That God elects a nation or an individual does not indicate God's love only for that particular nation or individual. God's election is always with a purpose for something. The ultimate meaning of God's election is to show that God has decided to redeem all through that election. God's love is never set for one group of people alone as against the others; this is only a wrong understanding of man. When God separates anyone from the world, it is only to send him into the world. Thus God's election never establishes groupism or casteism; God elects in order to show His love to all through that election.²⁹

In the world, there can be several expressions of theological ideas; without denying the validity of one, each shall respect the other. Chandran writes :

*In the light of these issues emerging out of the discussions in the Association of Third World Theologians the self-identity of Indian Christian Theology is to be sought in relation to the understanding of the nature of the complex Indian reality, with its socio-political, cultural and religious dimensions. It need not necessarily stand in isolation from theologies of other parts of the world. At the same time only by being faithful to the task of witnessing to the Gospel in the complex Indian situation can the Indian Christian theologies enrich theologies in other religions of the world.*³⁰

Politics

Man is one; humanity stems from one origin. But man lives in different parts of the world in different situations. So his customs, culture, political and economic structures differ from one another. These structures are a gift from God, although they are not divine. Chandran comments that in this idea, he is in agreement with Luther.³¹

Man shall not and cannot avoid politics. His very being is influenced by political changes. Jesus Christ also has shown the way i.e. to give to Caesar what is Caesar's.

In the modern democratic political structure, everyone, therefore, should make use of his franchise. Though it may be impossible to

elect a perfect candidate or party to power, one has to vote for the better choice. Therefore Chandran says :

*We have seen that it is necessary that Christians actively participate in political and economic fields.*⁸³

Chandran repudiates Augustine's view of politics though he accepts his ethical teachings. According to Chandran, Augustine has made a down-right condemnation of all earthly-human governments as of inferior value ; if these governments would not accept to be under the rule of Christ, then they are of no value. But Chandran's view is that these earthly governments also try to work for the welfare of man. The human rulers also strive to establish justice. Augustine thought only of man's spiritual salvation and left out of his sight the ' good world ' that God gave to man to be ruled.⁸⁴

Dealing with Luther, Chandran accepts Luther's view of ethics as consequent to man's 'bhakti' to God and dependent on his relationship with Christ. But he rejects Luther's political view because it is dependent on his view of the two-kingsdoms-one a spiritual, governed by grace and another worldly, governed by law. Chandran rejects it because if this two-kingdom concept is accepted then it will lead to two kinds of ethics. He also says that in the Lutheran countries, therefore, the Church and state function in separate realms and the church has not to interfere with the state.

*Because Luther taught a two-kingdom ethics, there arose the Lutheran view that whatever the state does must be accepted.*⁸⁵

Chandran also finds that Luther has given too much importance to the individual, as against the corporate aspect of Life.⁸⁶

With regard to a Christian's involvement in politics, Chandran is clear of two things:

1. that every Christian should participate in national activities, and
2. that a Christian should equip himself with proper knowledge in order to actively involve in the work,

It is very interesting that Chandran does not just talk of involvement but a preparation and planning to be done before that, too.

It is important to have the right perspectives and the right sense of priorities in order that we may play a meaningful role in India today.³⁷

Chandran warns against the danger of acting in India with political ideas from the West. Thus even in the realm of politics, Chandran thinks of an indigenised structure and warns against copying western forms of democracy.

To apply to our situation the traditional concepts of liberal democracy derived from the west will be very unrealistic.³⁸

Chandran himself was actively engaged in deciding the pros and cons of the Emergency. After the Emergency a whole double issue of Religion and Society was published on the views of many Christian circles on Emergency. One group, (e.g. M. M. Thomas, Tamilnadu Theological Seminary) fought against emergency publicly under some risk; another group e.g. Paulos Mar Gregorios and the Catholic Church defended it or supported it. But persons like Chandran and Mrs. Gopal Ratnam, General Secretary of the CSI, were undecided to support or oppose as a whole. They saw not only demerits but also merits.³⁹

Chandran saw a threat to democracy because the freedom of the press dwindled down and because of a lack of a strong opposition party.⁴⁰ At the sametime, he recognized that the lot of the poor people had become better.

Chandran deals with the proposed 'Freedom of Religion Bill 1978' in his own way. First he analyses the problem, its implications and then calls for a humble introspection as to whether 'we' (the Indian Christians) have not provoked the non-Christians by 'our' wrong methods of evangelism and calls

for a whole-hearted attempt to nation-building. He ends this article with a bold call not to surrender to the threats of the Bill but to continue to witness for Christ because it is the command of the Lord.⁴¹

With regard to the use of violence, Chandran holds the view that individual Christians may follow the way shown by Jesus: not to resist the evil. In India Gandhi taught ahimsa and satyagraha (non-violence and living with truth). Though this Gandhian policy brought great success in the case of the freedom struggle with the British, this method was not set in force later either in the case of freeing Goa or in the case of border struggles with Pakistan and China. So, Chandran writes;

*Therefore, a Christian believer need not oppose evil and thus live as Christ had set the model. But it is not fitting for the church to insist that the government also should follow this conduct. Moreover, it cannot be said that in a particular problem, what the church should do shall be the same as what the nation should do. If the whole nation is one with the church, then it is different. But this is not the case in India.*⁴²

Chandran sets the problem of violence in connection with the need for social change and makes a nice conclusion from it.

*The question whether this can be achieved thorough democratic and peaceful means alone does not have a simple and clear answer. I certainly wish that justice can be established peacefully, without resort to violence. But we need to recognize that the present situation, with so wide a gap between the rich and the poor which causes a life of poverty and misery for more than 200 Million people, is itself a violent one. Therefore, use of force and agitation to change the situation cannot be categorically condemned as violence, unless there are other more peaceful and effective alternatives alternatives to achieve justice.*⁴³

The careful wording in the above statement shows Chandran's dexterity in handling difficult matters very cautiously.

Relation with non-Christians

Dr. Amirtham writing on the theology of Chandran gives a caption to it as 'A vision for man'. By man is meant the whole humanity. Any Separating element that separates man from man whether it be caste or class, must be avoided. Chandran goes a step further to say that not even religion should separate the unity of humanity. God loves all people equally; the people of God are not only those who are in the church but every human being.⁴⁴

*It is not useful to form a syncretistic approach to other religions; instead Chandran advocates dialogue between people of different faiths.*⁴⁵

While Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism teach man the way of salvation through different ways, Christianity teaches the way of life of one who is already saved through sheer Grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. According to Chandran Christianity does not teach a way for salvation but a way of salvation. If the term bhakti could be translated as 'relation of believer with God' then he is nearer to it. However, he insists on Karma marga in this saved life of relationship. A Bhakti without Karma (works) is a body without life for Chandran. Therefore indigenisation is good so far as it seeks to present the Gospel of Christ in a meaningful way to the people of a country. But this cannot nullify the universal nature of faith nor break the universality of the believers all over the world.⁴⁶

Chandran rejects the accusation of some people in India that Christians are anti-national because of their close relationship with people of other countries in the world. Chandran cites that Gandhi, Nehru, Tagore and others also have had their foreign influences and still remained good national citizens of India.⁴⁷

Church

The concept of the Church stands in direct relation to Chandran's view of one humanity i.e. the people of God includes all men. Membership in the church is not because of an intellectual assent to a set of doctrinal statements but through baptism. Chandran

clearly relegates the importance of doctrines; however this must be seen at the background of his idea that membership in the church is not because one has done something by himself but because of God's sheer initiative to take him into His relationship.

The church is a fellowship of believers who live by God's grace it is a 'union of lover' i.e. 'those who experience love and show love to others'.

The sacraments show the love of Christ to us first; by participating in it we accept the love of Christ and want to live by giving this love to others.⁴⁸

Chandran, of course, is disinterested in the theological controversy over the 'real presence' of Christ in the Lord's Supper. To him, Christ is not more interested in being present in the elements than in men.⁴⁹ Chandran emphasises both individual and corporate aspects. Society is made of individuals and individuals, in turn, are shaped by the society. Therefore "no final solution can be found for social or community problems unless there is change in the individuals". And at the sametime, if the solution is not meant for the whole community, then individuals cannot attain their goal of life.⁵⁰

Chandran decries the attitude of certain members of the Church to take the ecclesiastical problems of the church to secular courts. According to him, the church should be able to administer itself.⁵¹

Sex and Family life

Sex attraction is normal to man ; it is not to be thought of something bad in itself as many Indians do. Everyone needs a good knowledge of sex based on proper scientific knowledge about physiology and biology. Sex is not only not bad in itself, it is also good in so far as it leads to real Christian love.

*In the family, sex love and divine love act together ; by transforming sex love, divine love becomes established.*⁵²

Divorce should not become cheap. Though there are unavoidable circumstances in which divorce could be accepted within the framework of Christian love, it is better to overcome sex love with divine love i.e. to sacrifice bodily pleasure on the altar of divine love.⁵³ Chandran cites the example of a person whose wife was insane. When a gospel healing team came to his village, people asked why this Christian lady should not first be cured. The husband replied that God has given him the grace not to put her away but to serve her in her infirmity. Chandran finds this as one of the best examples for "agape" love.⁵⁴ He considers marriage as a sacrament. Though sometimes, even Christian marriages may be motivated by bodily, financial or caste reasons, even these causes could, in due course of time, lead to a real Christian love.

If marriage happens on the basis of Christian love and not for any other human reason, then the trials and tribulations that haunt the married life can be overcome. Therefore, what matters is agapatic love which makes the Christian marriage a sacrament.⁵⁵

Chandran thinks that in the Indian context, family planning could be implemented for the sake of economic and national developments. He considers sex not just for procreation but for the strengthening of the relationship between husband and wife. However, he cautions against the misuse of family planning methods.⁵⁶

Neighbour

Chandran graphically brings out the importance of the triangular relationship of God-man-neighbour by citing the first questions of God to man according to the Old Testament: "Where are you?" to Adam and "Where is Abel your brother?" to Cain (Gen. 3:9 4:9). The religious life of man can, therefore, be never confine between God and man; without the neighbour the relationship remains incomplete.⁵⁷

Eschatology

God has a purpose for man. He will bring it to fulfilment. "Love will triumph at the end."⁵⁸ Man will not become one with God

but he will be in union with God ; he will be in union with God not as an individual but in a group. Chandran quotes 1 Jn. 3:2 to say that man cannot understand much of what will happen at the end ; he need not bother about it too ; it is enough if he knows that at the end he will be like Christ. The ecumenical movement is moving with this eschatological faith in God ; therefore, one should be prepared even to lay down his life for the cause of promoting the progress toward this fulfilment.⁵⁹

Evaluation

It may be mentioned that among the Indian Christian theologians, Chandran is the first to show the importance of systematic and coherent view in theology and he has attempted to write on these lines. He brings out the importance of economics in relation to ethics and church life in his theology and calls for a just economic order. But though he is interested in economic, political and social changes for the betterment of the poor, he often finds that he is primarily a theologian and cannot take a definite stand on political or economic fields without proper knowledge on these subjects. He gives extremely well balanced statements and always analyses the pros and cons of a problem accepting mistakes of the Christian community with a humble heart ; this does not mean that he is totally undecided. In important directions and for the cause of the Christian witness he is always unwavering and very daring too. His contribution to Indian Christian theology in bringing the ethical questions to the forefront has been unique. He is specially interested in looking at man as an ethical being and has lavishly contributed in this field. His concept of man is important in the sense that his views were shaped by all his experiences and insights from the ecumenical, national and the theological spheres.

Merits

One important factor that cannot be forgotten is the force with which Chandran, off and on, criticises the pietistic approach of people especially on prohibition, family planning and cinema-going.⁶⁰ He says that imposition of laws without biblical foundation on such trivial matters is the habit of one group of Christians ; but that is against the method of St. Paul for whom

only love decides everything. Chandran also reveals the danger of revival groups which emphasise individual salvation but still adhere to selfish interests.⁶¹ At the same time, Chandran emphasises the habits of Bible reading and praying together which is lacking among the so-called progressive groups among the Christians.⁶²

Chandran seems to support opposite ideas when he talks of the sacramental nature of baptism on the one hand and the claim that all are people of God on the other. But viewed from his thoughts on God's election, it becomes clear that the church exists for all people. Amirtham has rightly brought out Chandran's view that the need of men must decide the function of the church.

Demerits

In his view on Gospel and Law, Chandran sticks more to a Pauline view of Law than to James' view. According to him, Law and Gospel stand in contradiction. But in the Indian situation which has a tradition of different ethical codes for different groups or castes, it is very important to bring out the importance of the Law of God clearly. Chandran himself has rightly found out the importance of ethics in Indian situation. In Christian ethics Law and Gospel are not contradictory but complementary to each other. For, where there is no Law, why does a man need grace at all? Only through the Law man comes to know his sinful nature, his inability and total depravity to fulfill God's commandments; forgiveness and grace from God is meaningful only where there is need for them. The Indian background which connives at the sinful nature of man (e.g. Vivekananda) and exalts the divine nature of man⁶³ needs to know the standards to which men as a whole community is called to live together. Personal piety and high standards of ethical life are not missing in India; but this is not the criterion according to Chandran. What is important is a high ethical standard of life not from individuals alone or from certain castes alone, but in and for the whole community.

Chandran thinks that Luther's two-kingdom theory will usher in two kinds of Christian ethics and thus will create the danger of

separating the church from the state. But Chandran himself advocates two levels of solution: one for the individual Christian (peaceful method) and another for the nation (resisting evil) in the problem of violence.⁶⁴ Chandran also fears that Luther's ethics may lead a church to succumb to the state plans without questions. But Luther has not contributed to this danger. He opposed not only the state but even the church in which he was, when he knew that the Gospel of Christ was in danger of being misused and misinterpreted. The doctrine of the two kingdoms was his contribution but anything against the Gospel, he must oppose. He was a man bound to the Word of God and a captive to his conscience. He was disobedient to the church in Rome as much as he was disobedient to the state in Worms (the Diet of Worms).

Chandran also thinks that Luther made the 'gospel individualistic and other worldly'.⁶⁵ Luther's involvement in the peasant war is cited as instance. It should be pointed out here that Luther's teaching has contributed to the uprising of the peasants. Only when it took to harsh violence, he condemned it. In the case of violence in the religious reformation also, though Luther started the reformation, when it took to violence, in his absence, under the leadership of Karlstadt, Luther risked his life to come in person to stop the violent measures.⁶⁶

Conclusion

Chandran has done his best in contributing to the Indian Christian theology and his contribution is a lasting one so far as his demand for justice among the people in the economic field is relevant especially in the present day India. The following paragraph is a short summary of Chandran's main ideas in his own words :

The anthropology implied in the sharpened ecumenical concern for humanisation as a key to justice is not a humanistic anthropology. It is what might be described as a theological anthropology. It is an anthropology rooted in the Christological and soteriological affirmations of the Church. The meaning of the human is not derived from the empirical condition of man, but from the humanity revealed in Jesus Christ

and his ministry to bring fullness of human dignity to all men. Such a concern for humanisation as the key to social justice is rooted in the Biblical testimony to salvation through Jesus Christ. What is happening through the ecumenical dialogue and co-operation among churches is not a return to the old social gospel, but a renewed commitment to justice as a fruit of the salvation through Jesus Christ. It is a commitment to theological, Christological and soteriological ethics rather than to sociological or philosophical ethics.⁶⁷



CHAPTER VII

THOMAS' ANTHROPOLOGY : SPIRITUALITY FOR COMBAT IN SOCIETY

Life and Works

Madathilaparampil Mammen Thomas was born in Panavila in the State of Kerala (India) on 16th May 1916. He is a member of the Mar Thoma Church. Though he remains and likes to remain a lay man, neither ordained nor graduated in Theology, his contributions to the theological field is great. Thomas does not hide the fact that he had close relationships with marxist groups, especially in the early part of his life. He started his career among the youth (Student Christian Movement). Then he joined the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society under the leadership of P. D. Devanandan and soon became its Director. He was also the moderator of the central executive committee of the World Council of Churches (1968-75).¹

He has written the following books, apart from articles subscribed to books and periodicals.

1. *The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution* (1966)
2. *The Indian Churches of St. Thomas* (1967)
3. *The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance* (1969)
4. *Salvation and Humanisation* (1971)
5. *Theology of Mission in Contemporary India* (1971)
6. *The Realisation of the Cross* (1972)
7. *Man and the Universe of Faiths* (1975)
8. *New Creation in Christ* (1976)
9. *The Secular Ideologies of India and the Secular Meaning of Christ* (1976)

10. Some *Theological Dialogues* (1977)
11. Towards a Theology of *Contemporary Ecumenism* (1978)
12. *Response to Tyranny: Writings between July 1975 and February 1977* (1979)⁸

Method of Writing

Thomas has undoubtedly read widely. It is difficult to find out his real interests. His knowledge ranges from ideologies to religions, from man to God; he writes on positive and negative results of modern industry, the impact of culture on religion: he discusses freely communism and secularism and salvation and humanisation. He has fairly a good knowledge of many nations, specially of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Though this wide knowledge is a great merit for him, on the other hand it makes him complicated and difficult to be understood. The method he adopts makes it still worse; usually Thomas, when writing on a certain topic, cites widely various authors on their field and scarcely makes his own views clear; at times he confirms his own view by a quotation from a well known person.³

Sometimes it becomes difficult to know whether Thomas is interested only in anthropology or in theology too. According to him, it is neither the former nor the latter that counts but Christology, i.e. the New Man. It seems, while Thomas was interested in the new humanity, which he sought to explain through ideologies, his wife had contributed the basis on which it should be built viz. the spiritual basis for it. Thomas recognises her impact on his thinking.

*I do so however in gratitude for her constant concern for the Christcentredness of my vocation amidst my many wanderings among men, ideologies and theologies and for her intuitive spiritual discernment on which I have grown increasingly to rely.*⁴

This is an honour Thomas gives to his wife; from this it is clear that he felt compelled to take an interest in 'ideologies', whereas his wife was concerned for the 'Christcentredness' of his vocation.

Thomas has put these concerns together in his theological anthropology, although sometimes they still look like separate blocks put together i.e. patch work.⁵

On India

Thomas has rightly understood the situation in India i.e. that India at present, is in a turmoil of changes, and that it is in a period of transition. The old pattern of social structure is giving way to the newly forming industrial society; the old religious thinking is changing to accommodate the newly emerging scientific and technological advancements. These changes result in the breaking down of the strong and sturdy walls of the age old caste system, joint-family system and even the religious ideas of fate, on the basis of karma, and world as *inaya*.⁶ Thus in the history of the Indian Christian Theology, Thomas is a very important person because he is the pioneer of Indian theological anthropology. Those who were before him have all looked at theology from its classical aspect of theocentrism. Devanandan, actually, stands at the point of departure from 'classical theology' to what he called 'a new anthropology'. Thomas has made a lasting contribution on these lines of the 'new anthropology' of which Devanandan had a vision.

What kind of Theology?

Thomas has no ambition to be a systematic theologian, rather he does not like to be one such. He thinks that systematic theology is without life i.e. dead; it is neither practical nor helpful to man, because it deals with old facts of history and is not 'contextual'.

*But all scientific systematisation is an abstraction from reality. So is systematic theology.*⁷

It is clear that Thomas' theology cannot be called either systematic or dogmatic or biblical, although he makes use of all these three factors but it is termed in his own words as 'living theology', because it grapples with the problems of living human beings; I would like to call Thomas' theology 'pragmatic'. In India, practical theology has got little attention.⁸ This is so because Indians

do not really understand the necessity of a 'practical theology'; to them, any theology must be practical. Even a highly philosophic Advaita is meant to be practised; one can even speak of Advaitic Bhakti. A clear demarcation between principle and practice in theology is lacking in India. In a highly sophisticated country like Germany, theological systems are moulded just for the sake of a system and then it is applied to practical situations. But Thomas' method is vice versa : he diagnoses the present problems of a man in society and then tries to solve these problems in the light of theology. So his theological structure gets its basis in the present day problems.

Influences

Apart from his wife, Thomas recognises influences of three Western theologians namely, Barth, Berdyaev and Niebuhr.⁹ Thomas began his theological career right when India became independent. Therefore he said that the present age demands 'new articulations'; and the first of these should be 'theological anthropology'.¹⁰ Thomas calls for a redefinition of many theological concepts including Eucharist. This is a very important factor in the formation of the Indian Christian theology. At present there are multifarious and even contrary opinions on particular concepts like sin, salvation, creation, karma etc., held by different theologians in India. This is partly corresponding to the various interpretations of such religious concepts held by different sub-sections of Hinduism. The concept of sin, for example, varies very widely among the followers of Advaita, Vaishnava, Saiva and Carvaka. This is not to mention the different views of other religions in India like Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism. Islam and Christianity have also contributed their views to the Indian theological ferment. So Thomas is right in calling for a redefinition or right definition of the theological vocabulary in India.¹¹ This is a basic need, especially for the claim of M. M. Thomas, that today religious dialogue should go on where not only different religious people participate but also people of different ideologies, including atheism. But such a task can best be undertaken in a systematic dealing of theology.

Thomas is a careful writer. He is not carried away by emotion or does not drive his points to the extremes. He is always careful to

look into the other side of his argument and made balanced statements. This reflects his ability to be the chairman of a committee where it is essential for one to bear with the members of the extreme wings and arrive at a balanced statement. When he emphasises the corporate aspect of sin, he is quick to write on its individual aspect too. Salvation, to him is for both soul and body; the Gospel is for the whole man and for the whole world.¹² Invariably, he concludes his arguments with a dialectical slogan of the 'Cross and Resurrection'.¹³

Thomas' Theology

Strictly speaking Thomas did not intend to become a theologian. His primary interests were in the field of sociology and ideologies; while in search of this goal, he came across theology. It is not quite clear why Thomas changed his main concern from ideology to theology; probably no real change has taken place; but theology became a part of his main concern, in his attempt to find out a relevant social structure. In theology he concentrates more on the theme of salvation. His contributions are more in the field of anthropology and soteriology; he expresses his views, of course, sporadically on the concept of God, spirit and the problem of evil; the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, obviously gets the least treatment in his writings. God is father of Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ and His Divine Humanity, Thomas does not speculate more on God. He accepts that the problem of the Will of God and the will of man is very crucial to the understanding of theology; however he does not delve deep into this field.¹⁴ In accepting Christology as the deciding factor of theology, he is close to Barth. But in understanding God's revelation, Thomas deviates from Barth in that he finds God acting and revealing to all the peoples on earth in and through their own cultural milieu. God reveals Himself not only through Jesus Christ but through history. History teaches lessons of God.

Thomas' concept of God is not deistic but comes very close to the "Exodus"-idea of God involving Himself in the revolution, rebellion and revolt of the oppressed against the oppressing.¹⁵ He thinks that a great revolution is on the way in Asia in the fields of society and

politics. It is interesting to note that Thomas does not talk of an Industrial or agrarian revolution in Asia but socio-political revolution.¹⁶ He condemns the wrong approaches to a revolution namely blessing it or condemning it or taking an indifferent attitude to revolution under the pretext of pietism. Thomas wants Christians to participate in this revolution under the banner of the Gospel of the Crucified and Risen Lord.¹⁷ It is important to note, that he understands by revolution a basic change (English usage), not necessarily, a violent clash (German usage).

Thomas sees a spiritual dimension in almost all walks of life ; e.g. in the industrial development, nation-building, community-living and in the awakening of the Africans to find out their self-identity. Even in Karl Marx, the moral or religious or the transcendent aspect can be seen ; otherwise 'in the name of whom or of what' did he fight for the abolition of 'night labour, child labour and the African slave trade ?'-so Thomas asks.¹⁸ Thomas traces the view of African leaders like Nyerere, Mbiti, etc., and appreciates their humanistic approach to their problems in the nation building. He thinks that the Africans are developing a 'new anthropology' specially at their traditional background.¹⁹

God is not to be shut out of politics, rather it is right there that He is needed. The meaning of God is to be moulded in and through the political revolutions and decisions that are taking place today. Thomas appreciates Gandhi for the way in which he brought religion right into politics :

*The unique contribution of Mahatma Gandhi has been his discovery in the Hindu spiritual tradition of sources of faith which could spiritualise and humanise modern politics. Here, as nowhere else, one may discern a real dialogue between the unitive or mystic spirituality of Hinduism with the self-understanding of modernity.*²⁰

Thomas believes that the recent social changes have drastically altered the age old caste system in India.²¹ Therefore no longer can one talk of a caste-bound society in India. Thus Thomas sees the Hand of God in the social changes. Depicting the hallmarks

of a modern society in the world, Thomas finds three main divisions in it, namely "..... the scientific and technological revolution; secondly the revolt of the oppressed groups..... demanding social and international justice; and thirdly, the break-up of the traditional integration between religion, society and state and the secularisation of common life."²²

Thomas finds a close relationship between technology and morality. He believes that the former affects the latter in modern society. Therefore one who wants to work on the problem of morality in modern society must understand the situation of science and technology.²³ So Thomas calls for a 'restructuring of the traditional relation between religion, society and politics.....'²⁴. The concept of God becomes wider in the view of Thomas including all spheres of human activity. In India, therefore, where the Christians count for only 2.6 %, a necessity to change the patterns of society inevitably leads to a mutual working together with people of other faiths. Thus arises the need to look at non-Christians, not as those who only need to receive something, but as people who contribute to the welfare of man. God has honoured humanity in that He Himself had become man. His 'divine humanity' (Sen), therefore, remains as a model and also a judgment for all human activity.²⁵ Thomas wants to proclaim that God's Hand is to be seen not only inside the church or even in the field of religion but in every act of man-religious or political. (But often Thomas lacks the personalistic approach found in the judaistic concept of God.) Often he speaks of God as the 'divine ultimate'.²⁶ Probably he does this in order to make dialogue with men of other faiths possible. In fact the main thrust of Thomas' book on 'The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance' is to establish the fact that Hinduism has, consciously or unconsciously, taken over quite a lot not only from Western culture, e.g. education but also from Christianity. Thomas traces in the great reform movements beginning from R. M. Roy (beginning of 19th century) till Radhakrishnan how the Hindu leaders have acknowledged Christ in their teachings and reforms.

However Thomas turns the coin here also and says that it is possible for the Hindus also to talk of influencing Christianity. He writes ;

*If Christians can speak of an unknown Christ of Hinduism, Hindus can speak of an unknown Vedanta in Christianity.*²⁷

Thomas' Anthropology

Two terms need explanation before Thomas' anthropology is dealt with—Secularisation and Humanisation. By secularisation, Thomas means a necessary acceptance of what is considered to be 'worldly' by some pietistic circles. He opines that theology ceases to be relevant when it begins to talk of the church as something that is not in the world. The day to day activities of the world, to whatever section it may belong, form part and parcel of the realities of life which theology must understand and then react accordingly. This is what Thomas means by 'secular' aspect of Christianity. The Word of God is to be proclaimed at the background of the daily newspaper.²⁸ Though Thomas views pietists with dissatisfaction, he also says that he is proud of having hailed in the tradition of 'pure spirituality and individual piety'.²⁹

The word 'humanisation' is the most important term in Thomas' writings; it is a word which stands almost on par with the word 'salvation'; the only difference is that while the former denotes salvation in history, the latter connotes a context of eternity. Thomas maintains that the concept of man has radically changed in the present twentieth century because of change of sense of time and distance. Earlier people had lived in groups in exclusion; today this is no longer usual. Each group affects the other; interactions among nations have become normal way of life. The establishment of the world organisations (UNO, WCC, UNESCO, FAO etc.) and the scientific advancement which has made distance shorter, have contributed to this change. East and West have come closer to each other, in that they make 'one history'.

*But thanks to the one history and the identical questions of human existence, such participation and meeting can now be actualised.*³⁰

Man is the crown of all creation. He changes nature into culture because of his 'free subjectivity' which gives him a creative power

to master the world i.e. to hominize it. Thomas reminds one of God's command to the first man to subject the world (Gen. 1:28) by his description of 'hominisation'. Creation is not an event 'at the beginning' of the world but is an on-going process; so also redemption.

Man is the sole monarch of the earth; nature is subject to his creativity and man shapes the world according to his freedom. Thomas just falls short of calling man the God of the earth. Quoting Metz, he emphatically remarks:

*In relation to nature man sees himself as a demiurge, a master builder of the world, who creates his world out of the material of nature, the world of man, a hominized world.*³¹

By directing and helping the world events, man creates his own history. Using phrases of Nicolas Berdyaev, Thomas says:

*In this process, man creates not only his world, but also, in a sense, himself, so that 'history is humanity creating itself'; and freedom is experienced as 'eternal newness, eternal creative ecstasy.'*³²

Thomas finds a revolution in the human spirit also. This spiritual revolution is responsible for social revolution and to some extent consequent of the same. Every human being is a spiritual person because he has 'self-awareness' or 'spiritual perception'. Therefore the animals are not equal with man. This inner awareness can be called 'faith-response' also. Thomas is quick to warn here that the word 'self' should not be taken in the sense of Advaitic 'self'. The modern man's search for 'self' cannot be equated with the search for God. According to Thomas, God and 'self' are not identical.³³ Thus mankind is in a revolution to understand itself; the present day disquiet and revolts are expressions of it.

When Thomas describes the nature of man, he is not influenced by the concept of man as body, soul, spirit/basar, nephesh, ruach; rather his view fits in with a graeco-hindu view of man as matter and spirit. Strictly speaking Thomas does not classify man either as matter or as spirit or even both, but that his 'selfhood is poised between nature and spirit'.³⁴ Thus on the one hand, he is attracted by

religion and on the other hand by ideologies. Man is both homo religious and homo ideologicus. Created by God and alienated from Him, man has idolatries and ideals, which like the Law in the NT thought, have a dialectical character; on the one hand they point to God Whom man has defied but cannot escape, on the other they point to the condition of man as running away from God to find his ownself-justification and involved in endless self-frustration.³⁵ It is very interesting to note here that Thomas describes man as 'between nature and spirit' but belonging to both religion and ideology.

Thomas visualises the emergence of a new spirit in modern man—the spirit of 'self awareness', of freedom, of self-determination, of a search for self-identity' and of 'involvement in history' for liberation. Man seeks his self in 'universal love' in dialogue with people of other faiths and ideologies.³⁶ Thomas depicts man with four characteristics and they all centre around the concept of freedom; and thus, in his concept of man, freedom becomes the basic concept.

"Firstly" this freedom renders man a power with which he creates his own history and, thereby himself too. But man's creativity can result in destructivity too. By virtue of his freedom to create, man falls into the pit of pride and arrogance. And probably, in the history of mankind, man has achieved more destructive abilities than constructive. Thomas believes that it is here that man should seek remedy in his spiritualness.

"Secondly," modern man sees freedom as self-determination and the search for self-identity."³⁷ All over the world man, as an individual or as a group, wakes up to a desire to determine his own on the basis of his own identity. The proof of this is to be seen not only in the fight for freedom in Africa or America but in the constitutional forms of every government, protecting the human rights. Thomas delineates this among Buddhists, Muslims, Tamils, Negroes and Europeans. In order to establish this self-identity and self-determination, man joins hands with his own group people. When the strength of this group grows it is possible that it infringes the freedom of other groups and thus becomes 'inhuman'.

"Thirdly, modern man sees the destiny of his self in history, defined as the movement of human liberation".³⁸ Thomas thinks that till the beginning of the 19th Century, such a clear understanding of history as liberation was not in vogue. And on the other hand, history was thought of in cyclical pattern in which 'nothing new happens in the world'. But today history is to be understood as liberation not 'from' history but 'in' history. Revolution helps man in this process of liberation but here also some are inclined to think of a 'Return of All Things' as Nietzsche.³⁹

"Fourthly, there is a new awareness that the human freedom is realised in Universal love ; that is, in open dialogue and communion among persons and groups, within the framework of the common recognition of the unity of mankind and the universality of the dignity of man qua man."⁴⁰ In this point, Thomas stresses the necessity of man living with other men in good fellowship. In such a fellowship one has to cross the borders of the 'we-group', nation, colour and creed. Not only communism but American and French revolutions have tried to establish this fellowship but they all have fallen short of achieving their goal.

In all these four characteristics of man, Thomas portrays the positive and negative sides of the same trait. Freedom is creative but it can be destructive ; self identity is good but it can become inhuman ; history is liberation but it can turn back so slavery ; revolutions have established the dignity of man but they have also fallen short of realising their end. Probably in this dialectical analysis of man by Thomas, one is reminded of Luther's dictum : 'Simul justus et peccator'. Luther's double aspect of being at the same time justified and also sinful is expanded into the social nature of a human being by M. M. Thomas. While Luther saw man **Coram Deo**, Thomas sees man qua man. The nation of justification and sinfulness belongs more to the sociological than to the theological realm : "man qua man". However they both converge in the Christological realm as Thomas points out. Thus Thomas' description of the nature of man, strictly speaking, does not belong to the Indian interpretation of man.

While the Indian (Hindu) description of man stresses the 'atman' aspect in man i. e. his partial divine aspect, the Christian/Western

portrayal of man, emphasises the sinful, the 'rebellious' aspect of man. Thomas tries to bring both together and shows how man, who is endowed with high potentialities, stands still in danger of misusing them. Thomas' anthropology is neither Eastern nor Western but it is geared to the newly developing secularism which spreads like wild fire among the intelligentsia both in the West and in the East. From this point of view Thomas' anthropology deserves a very important place.

With this background on the nature of man, Thomas proceeds to draw conclusions on the impact of man in society. Today, in this 20th Century, with the ever advancing technological researches, a new age has dawned on man. Religions, with their traditional interpretations of God, are losing ground and therefore stand in constant need of reinterpretation. The major religions of the world have taken up the issue on hand and have dealt with it accordingly. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Marxism and African religions have reacted to these new situations.⁴¹ That is, the 'classical theology' is in the process of being replaced by a 'new anthropology'. At this juncture, religions give way to the formations of new ideologies like communism, atheism, secularism etc. These ideologies are more interested in the welfare of mankind, rather than in God. The nature of atheism in different ideologies differs from each other.⁴² Thus between different kinds of atheism, found in different ideologies, the question arises as to which is real and 'authentic atheism'.

In this atmosphere of old religions getting themselves renewed to face the onslaught of ideologies, dialogue provides the best way out for a give and take between faiths, religions and ideologies. And a dialogue is made possible especially when it is based on the emerging new anthropology. Man is the same everywhere though he may belong to different cultures, faiths, races and ideologies. But this does not mean that dialogue happens only in a non-religious atmosphere. Though dialogue is based on anthropology, it will have to deal with religious problems too. Society and religion are intrinsically intertwined. The real issue is neither theological nor anthropological but the 'new man' (Christological). Christ is the humanity of God. In

Christ, God has taken side with man. Humanity is honoured in Christ. Man has found the worth and value of humanum in Christ. It is not worthless to be a human being; one need not be desperate about the evils of the world. The evils must be overcome with good; this is the way of cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is the goal for mankind; in Him the Humanum is revealed. To understand this humanum in Jesus Christ and to become human like Him is humanisation; this is indeed the salvation to which all religions strive. However salvation can be spoken of in terms of eternity while the same can be termed humanisation in history.

The way to attain this mukti or salvation lies only through the way of action. Neither gnanamarga i.e. the way of wisdom, to realise the Brahman in oneself, nor Bhakti marga i.e. the way of mystical union with God can help man to achieve humanisation. Bhakti marga is not useful because of its otherworldly attitude and a negative approach to this world.

The traditional Hindu idea of salvation (mukti) was individualistic, inward self-realisation of mystic union with the Absolute Brahman, which gave no ultimate spiritual significance to social life and accepted caste and its duties as ordained for this relative vyavaharika realm of karma samsara.⁴⁴

Therefore man must join the way of action and be involved in the activities of the world. Politics is not only secular and religion not only holy; for man both are equally essential. Gandhi has shown the right way of treating politics religiously.⁴⁵ The phrases 'secular and sacred' are bygone phrases.

However, this knowledge of humanisation is not the end of human achievement. This is an evolution in which man passes from one stage to another. Humanity has got the potentiality inherent in itself for this onward march. But every step brings its own peril. Neither the stone age, nor the agrarian nor industrial nor the highly advanced technological age is without peril. Humanum always stands in peril of destruction; probably the more the potency of man grows, the greater is the peril. Thus Thomas does not hesitate

to stress the tragic, sinful nature of man. Thomas' hamartiology is pinned to this double aspect (negative and positive) of man's potentiality.

In spite of appreciating the glorious compliments that Vivekananda and Aurobindo shower on the spiritual nature of man,⁴⁶ Thomas does not forget to warn the other side of it. He says that the atom bomb today teaches man that he will live either as one world or die as a whole. Quoting the Russel-Einstein Manifesto, Thomas pithily remarks :

Remember your humanity and forget the rest.

If you can do so, the way lies open to a new paradise ; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death.

Ofcourse mankind is a plurality. Therefore even if they remember their common humanity, they cannot 'forget the rest'.⁴⁷

In every attempt of man, Thomas sees a danger ; even in the good motivated deeds, Thomas finds the lurking evils. Thomas sees the world missions also in this context, in which they all try to create 'one world community'; but, Thomas points out, they stand in danger of creating "new divisions, dominations and tyrannies" too.⁴⁸

In another context where Thomas talks about the importance of secularism and political involvement, he is quick to warn the danger of this involvement.

The peril of power-politics in a technological age under the asuraic power of unbridled egoism of individuals and collectives producing the Nietzschean super man is a real one.⁴⁹

Thomas does not actually suggest or find out any way out of this double nature of man's potentiality whereby, on the one hand good purposes are brought and on the other equally evil deeds are done. Thus Thomas looks pessimistic about human progress in this technological age. According to him:

*..... hominisation increases the potentiality of both, humanisation and dehumanisation bring both 'heaven' and 'hell' closer to man.*⁵⁰

The cause of this peril for humanity is already in man, in his nature which is 'poised between nature and spirit'. Man can use religion, ideologies or anything for that matter in a good or bad way. Even communism with all its whole-hearted effort for humanisation, has not been without misusers.⁵¹

Thomas specifies the concept of sin as bondage and self-interest also. Bondage takes different shapes in different ages. But human nature, because of its self-interest, creates always a new bondage when man is free from the old bondage by the power of the spirit. Even unity may lead to bondage, according to Thomas.⁵²

Man need not despair because of this tragic situation if only he can still look at the cross of Christ and believe in His resurrection.⁵³ It is here that Thomas finds the finality and uniqueness of the cross of Christ. Ofcourse cross should not be separated from resurrection.⁵⁴

Thomas is hardly ever using the biblical terms body, soul, spirit, "heart" in describing man. He is more influenced by the scientific philosophical description. According to him man is essentially a spiritual being. Though Thomas does not talk about the soul of man, he considers reason as an important faculty of man. Thomas opines that though reason is only a part of man, it guides him on the whole.⁵⁵ It is no wonder that Thomas appreciates R. Roy and Nehru who gave to reason a special value.

However other Indian theologians like Appasamy and Chakkarai laid more weight on the 'heart' of man rather than on reason.

According to Thomas :

Reasoning is characteristically human activity. However, it cannot be isolated from the totality of the self and its responses and functions. It is conditioned by the responsible self, in fact

*it is self becoming aware of itself, to survey, criticize, evaluate and correct itself. In this sense while reason is a function of the self, it also transcends it. Similarly we may speak of theology as faith seeking rational understanding of the truth and meaning of its commitment.*⁵⁶

The importance Thomas gives to reason is obvious here. It has to be seen at the background of the importance he gives to self-awareness and self-understanding of man ; reason is the basis for this : rather, reason is self-awareness.

Thomas spells out the positive side of the function of body of man. This is well done specially at the Indian-Hindu background, where body is a prison that holds the soul. In fact none of the Indian Christian theologians considers the body as something like a hindrance for salvation. However, neither Appasamy nor Chenchiah nor Chakkarai brings out the positive aspect of the body of man as Thomas. Thomas wants to justify that even Aurobindo, with his doctrines of integral Yoga, does not mean that the individual life or 'bodily life' is excluded in the cosmic evolution. Thomas brings the value of the body equal to that of soul and mind when he stresses the fact of the 'empty tomb' ; not only man's soul is important, but his body and mind and for that matter the nature too.⁵⁷

Though Thomas evaluates modern technology as a stride forward in the progress of humanity, he does not hesitate to decry its disadvantages leading to 'pollution of nature, population explosion and morality being threatened by it. He warns that technological advancement should not forget the human needs of body and soul, 'psychic health', 'peace of mind and personal integration'.⁵⁸

Thomas distinguishes two kinds of reason ; 'technical reason' and 'revolutionary reason'. These are opposite types and one fights against the other.⁵⁹ Thomas reminds the Gnostics and Hindus in classifying humanity into different types. Some incline to myths, others to metaphysics and still others to secular approaches. So the Gospel is to be presented according to the level in which the man is.⁶⁰ Thomas thinks that myths are not lower level media,

Today, the study of the human psyche in religions and secular life has brought out in a new way the greater power and appeal which images and myths have in the life of man and society.⁶¹

Process

The word 'process' also finds a place in Thomas' writings : he talks of a 'process' of humanity.⁶² It could, therefore, be said that both philosophical and scientific approaches, are held by Thomas in his concept of man. According to a philosophical approach, he thinks that mankind is in a process, wherein true humanum is in an evolution from the material realm into the spiritual. The same thought is brought out by him in the scientific-psychological view of man's awareness to his 'self' and in the 'self-understanding' of man.⁶³ Thomas does not confine himself to one field of knowledge-philosophical or secular or religious ; but he includes ideas of 'process', importance of 'body', 'self-identity' of man etc. This is why his anthropology gives the impression of a patch-work.

Sin

Thomas does not want to place sin outside of man ; it is already to be seen within the process of the progress of man. Every step in the human progress creates its own 'fall'. Unlike most of the Indian theologians, Thomas does not like to interpret the concept of sin by the Indian terminology 'karma'. Thomas uses "karma" only in the positive aspect of "karma marga" as the way of salvation through works. Thomas does not agree that a man can be born poor because of his karma because poverty is, according to Thomas 'man-made'.

But the poor of the world are in revolt, because they know that poverty is not inevitable fate but man-made and therefore that it can be overcome by men.⁶⁵

Pohlmann opines that neither the fate aspect nor the deed aspect of man can be taken away from the concept of sin i.e. the external and the internal aspects or the responsible and the fate aspects.⁶⁶

But Thomas does not contribute to the 'fate' aspect of sin. To him evil is not external force that intrudes into the progress or well-being of man but is a part and parcel in the process of the evolution of the humanum.⁶⁷

Sin is also self-righteousness. While describing the three humanisms viz. Stalinism, democratic utopianism and scientific humanism, Thomas condemns all these three attempts because they all fell a prey to the sin of self-righteousness and belief in history.⁶⁸ To Thomas, fanatic or pharisaic religion is as bad as atheism.⁶⁹

Along with Teilhard, Thomas finds no meaning in the doctrine of original sin; he calls for a 'radical redefinition' of it.⁷⁰ Creation and redemption are closely linked with each other. This traditional view, of course, should be redefined as to say not that God 'created' but that God 'creates'; so also sin should be redefined.⁷¹ Quoting from the Dutch Catechism, Thomas agrees that "the sin of Adam and Eve is closer than we imagine. It is our own selves."⁷²

Thomas traces the origin of sin to the 'spirit' realm rather than 'to the brute in him.' Sin has more to do with the 'spirit' of man than with his bodily acts. To Thomas, sin has its origin in the human freedom because 'freedom grew in man and hence sin.'⁷³

Indeed, in the creative process, matter-energy evolves through life and mind to the spirit, which in man involves a sense of self and freedom. And man encounters a transcendent spiritual reality impinging upon his spirit; this is the reality of God. After the emergence of man, he is co-creator with God; and man's spiritual response is the focus around which the creative process continues to move forward in history.⁷⁴

Thomas clearly says that his main purpose in writing the book on "Man and the Universe of Faiths" is to show that leaders of major religions tend to interpret their religious principles in line with humanisation; his attempt was to bring religion into contact with ideologies.

*We have all along, in this study, defined human spirituality as finding its expression in human self-awareness and self-commitment to the divine ultimate, that is in ideology and faith. The interrelation between the two in the life of modern man has been our theme ; and we have been dealing with its nature in traditional religions.*⁷⁵

Thomas sees two different ways in this world; one is called religious and the other secular. He believes that the real way for the salvation of man lies neither in the former nor in the latter but in the proper combination of both. He accepts that secularisation is a fact of modernity. But it alone cannot help man.

*The problem of a freedom which emphasises freedom of choice without choosing any truth and therefore breaking down into 'fear of freedom' (Eric Fromm) and willingly surrendering it to religious dogmatism or secular totalitarianism remains with us. And it is clear that if we have to build and keep the values of personal freedom in an 'open' community, it too must have a moral reinforcement and spiritual legitimacy.*⁷⁶

Culture and Faith

According to Thomas, religions have a direct relationship to the culture in which they have sprung forth. Therefore the major cultures can best be understood in their respective religious backgrounds. He says :

*Since cultures are traditionally moulded inwardly by their respective religions, the idea of Christ's transcendence has to be extended to include religion, as its judge and redeemer, it opens up the possibility of Christ reforming all religions and in-forming Himself in them.*⁷⁷

Citing Pannenberg, Thomas says that even in the Old Testament the concept of God came to be moulded only through a give and take between many other cultures and religions.⁷⁸ So Thomas justifies syncretism, provided it happens in Christ.

Such a view is necessitated because of humanisation and this ofcourse is a divine activity.

*The transcendence of the Word and Deed of God in Jesus Christ over all religions and quasi-religions of mankind provides for me the basis for a radical relativisation of all religions including Christianity and all secular ideologies including Atheism ; and its understanding of Jesus Christ as the humanisation of God rejecting and electing mankind in Jesus Christ points to a transcendent power which can renew them all.*⁷⁹

According to Thomas, Barth is right in condemning all religions' including Christianity as human endeavours ; i. e. Barth 'has provided the basis for a radical relativisation of all religions'.⁸⁰ Therefore Christianity also can be supplemented by other forms of humanisation as it is found in different cultures and nations. One may call it 'syncretic' but Thomas is willing to accept it because this syncretism is 'Christ-centred'.⁸¹

Therefore faith must be understood in the context of culture.

Culture deals with the patterns of human existence, the ethics and ethos characteristic of faith. This is the sphere of values and structures of personal and social behaviour, expressing the faith in human relations. Creed is faith in search of understanding.

.....

*Cultus, ethics and creed are necessary to faith, and are by no means non-essential.*⁸²

Thomas' contribution to the relation and interaction between religion and culture is outstanding and merits a detailed study.

Church

Though Thomas is a member of the Mar Thoma Church, he was at the same time the chairman of the central committee of the W.C.C. His concept of church is not confined to narrow limits of denomination but embraces a wide range of groups - religious and even

secular - who could gather in the Name of Christ. He wants to recognise even those who are treated to be outside the church because they have 'implicit faith-response to Christ'. This attitude, he says, will guard the church against 'spiritual egoism'.⁸³

Thomas touches the burning theological/ecclesiastical problem in India, namely whether the traditional form of baptism is an essential mark of a Christian. Though he does not spell out a definite answer - yes or no to it, he points to the direction of the solution. The question: should one necessarily be baptised and become a member of the church is not put in the right form; rather one should ask: what 'form' should the church take? He cites K. C. Sen, who did join the official church but had his own baptism and church.⁸⁴ According to Thomas, Baago confuses the 'form' of the church with its 'necessity'.⁸⁵ Thus Thomas agrees to the 'necessity' of the church but proposes a new pattern to it. Unfortunately he does not prescribe a detailed structure of the church he visualises.

He proposes two names with which the church may be called in India. In an early book: "Salvation and Humanisation" he advocates the name: 'Indian Religious Community': ofcourse he himself was not satisfied with this term.⁸⁶ In a later book: "Man and the Universe of Faiths" he wants to call the church 'people of the Messiah'.⁸⁷ All those who accept Jesus as Messiah belong to this group i.e. accepting the centrality of 'the life, death and resurrection of Jesus' for the whole history of the world.

The relation between the church and the world is to be seen in mission. The church has no right to be egoistic or arrogant because of its position. It is only the 'inner circle' of a greater circle, which is the world; Christ rules both. Claiming Barthian interpretation, Thomas says that the world exists in Christ though in a hidden way. The task of the mission, therefore, is 'a revealing of what is hidden'.⁸⁸ The church is invisible. The border between the church and the world cannot be made visible either through church membership, or even through baptism.

The difference is defined by imaginative and behavioural sensitivity to what God is doing in the world to make and to keep human life human, to achieve the maturity of men, that is the new humanity.⁸⁹

Thus Thomas sees God's work in this world in making man mature whereby he becomes 'human'. It is interesting to note that Thomas chooses the first title Jesus received i. e. Messiah- as the Saviour of the whole man: even the title 'Son of man' has not attracted him as much as the title 'Messiah' did. A recognition of Christ's presence as Messiah in the universe seems more necessary than the recognition of his historical life and sufferings.

Thomas wants to see Jesus as Messiah, not only on the Biblical proclamation but in today's situation. The 'unknown Christ should be understood in this context of the 'invisible Church'.

Mission is important but the missionary cannot claim monopoly for the message and work of Christ. Christ is at work among those who have not accepted Him even before the mission goes there. Thomas agrees with Niles, whom he cites on his view of mission as :

The important thing to recognise is the fact that that which determines the church's mission remains independent of it..... This means that those engaged in the mission must be prepared to encounter in their work the result of God's free initiative, the previousness of Jesus Christ in every situation, the all-embracing work of the Holy Spirit within which the mission of the church is set.⁹⁰

After talking about fellowship of the people of the Messiah, Thomas crosses its borders to talk of 'Christian fellowship' with those of non-Christians among whom they live as 'diaspora'. Citing the narrative of Jesus about the 'Last Day' (Mt. 25), Thomas says that those who belong to Christ actually do not know that they have served Him. He wants to express this view by saying :

...the final test of faith acknowledgement of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is seen in men's participation in the work of the Holy Spirit in building tissues of genuine 'human' community within and between the communal groupings of men in history, as signs of the ultimate Kingdom to come. The eucharistic community and the wider community in the Messiah are sacramental signs of it; but they are really credible only in so far as they express their eschatological hope in action, in praxis, by mediating the spiritual dynamic of the New Humanity in Christ through their concern for human community.⁹²

This Thomas calls 'Christ-centred Secular Humanism' or 'a secular fellowship in Christ'.⁹³ The purpose of the extension of Koinonia with people of other faiths is to liberate the poor and use the scientific advances to serve social justice.⁹⁴ Thus according to Thomas the purpose of the mission should be to make the poor rich and to bring social justice. He decries the fact that the church today has lost its influence of the Constantine's time and has become 'one minor department of life'.⁹⁵

Eschatology

Christ's resurrection should be considered as 'bodily resurrection'. In dealing with the question whether at the end, man alone will survive or the whole nature and cosmos, Thomas takes his stand against the existential emphasis of 'the individual and the now'. He wants to avoid both the 'secularists who are seeking a socialism with human face.....and those who are seeking a return from socialism and scientism to the ideology of individualism.....'. He believes that nature and cosmos also take part in the final redemption of Christ.⁹⁶

I have no difficulty in affirming that if we take the bodily resurrection of Jesus seriously, nature, society and cosmos are in a real sense part and parcel of human personhood and are glorified in the divine humanity of Jesus Christ.⁹⁷

Thomas distinguishes between two types of kingdoms: one 'as operating within history and the other 'as the consummation of history'.

*The relation between the kingdom as operating within history as dynamic teleology pushing history to its fulfilment through human creativity, and the kingdom as the consummation of history solely through judgement of man's creation. It is the old debate between continuity, and discontinuity, between history and eschatology, or between the historical and futuristic realisation of the New Creation in Christ, in new forms.*⁹⁸

Thomas abnegates the attempts of both the above two schools; he means that there should be no over-emphasis of either the historical or the eschatological aspects. Both 'must be kept together without either too radical a division between them or too radical an identification'.⁹⁹

Neither Teilhard de Chardin nor Ellul has put forth a right relation between history and eschatology. The former has rightly stressed the value of matter but his 'identification of God's kingdom with the creative process of history does not adequately explain or deal with evil in a dynamic universe.'¹⁰⁰ The latter has opposed a 'theology of society' put forward by the W.C.C. and 'he has made the kingdom so transcendent to the process of human evolution that it becomes utterly irrelevant to historical decisions and struggles for a genuine humanism '¹⁰¹. However Thomas finds agreement with Berkhof's idea of eschatology, because he has spoken of the Gospel as a "great movement from lower to higher, going through estrangement and crises, but also through atonement and salvation, and so directed towards its ultimate goal, a glorified humanity in full communion with God, of which goal the risen Christ is the guarantee and the first fruits".¹⁰² Thomas actually leans towards the 'creation-incarnation-resurrection' axis of theology though it should annex within itself 'the realities of Fall, Judgement and Atonement

as necessary motives.¹⁰³ In other words, it means that the eschatological patterns should be integrated with the basic historical theology.

The final end, however, is centred in the New Humanity, but it is not clear what exactly it is. Quoting Moltmann, Thomas says;

*Only when the real historic and religious differences between peoples, groups and classes are broken down in the Christ event in which the sinner is Justified does there come a prospect of what true humanity can be and will be.*¹⁰⁴

Thomas' Proposals:

In this scientific-secularistic world, if theology should be meaningful, then christology, the New Man, New Humanity must be the central feature. Humanisation is as important as salvation. Love for one's neighbour reflects one's love for God. Religion can't save a man: mostly it is formed by cultural milieu. Christ is not Christianity but He transcends it: all religions stand under the Judgement of Christ. Man is in the process of understanding himself. So without any religious, racial or ideological distinctions, every-one contributes through dialogue also, towards this evolution of the New Humanity, based on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Thomas suggests four points whereby traditional theology can become meaningful for dealing with the present day problems of the modern society:

1. That creation and redemption must be linked with each other. Creation continues; so redemption too. Every creative process has a redemptive history-
2. That the church, invisible, be citizens of a forgiven universe.
3. That humanisation becomes the meeting point for dialogues between the religions and ideologies, so that there comes into being a secular fellowship in Christ.

4. That though religions can't be abolished, a theology of religious pluralism is worked out, because all religions, taking their shape through their respective cultural processes, should meet together in Christ; for even syncretism is to be welcomed, if Christ is at its centre.¹⁰⁵

An Evaluation of Thomas 'Anthropology

The concept of man had been a weak spot in the Indian Christian theology. Indian Christian Theologians were interested either in Christology or missiology or ecclesiology till the appearance of Devanandan in the Indian Christian theological scene. Devanandan had pointed out that Christianity in dialogue with Hinduism should try to take the starting point from 'the new anthropology'. He dug to some extent on this field. But much of what he has done was only to show the future direction, which the Indian Christian theologians should undertake. Thomas followed him quickly, not only in accepting the direction but working out a construction of anthropology for which Indian Christian theology will ever be grateful to him.

Thomas has been influenced from various quarters. Basically, he is an ideologist for humanisation. Though he is not a secular humanist secular humanisation and even communism have made a lasting influence on him. Using E. Fromm's words, Thomas says:

*Marxism is a Humanism because it is a scheme of man's emancipation from alienation, the return of man to himself, his self-realisation.*¹⁰⁶

He is neither fully eastern nor fully western but both spheres have attracted him in their own ways. In his concept of culture and religions, he has taken much from Hinduism, particularly from Mahatma Gandhi. Much of his theological thinking has been from the west too.

Moreover, in his evaluation of the scientific and technological advancement, role of reason and the importance of moral and ethical standards, he is influenced by western thinking. That Jesus Christ makes history and that history moves forward to Him,

that man is free, though it may be tragic and that utopianism and inherent goodness of man must be rejected these also he learned from the west. Thomas mentions the influences from the west in his article on "European theology....."¹⁰⁷ These are all very essential for his anthropology; and to this structure, he annexes the biblical basis of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. He has worked out the matrix on which all these would find a fitting place. Specifically, he formed his view of the relation between culture and faith resulting in humanisation. He is not only sincere but bold therefore to advocate syncretism. Appreciating Thomas' effort, Boyd says :

*Christians must join others in what Thomas calls a 'battle for a true anthropology', and it may be that Christians with their deep biblical insight into human nature can bring new dimensions of love and caring and justice into the secular struggle of the third world today.*¹⁰⁸

Thomas himself thinks that though different religions have different ways of looking at the same ultimate truth, they all have to grapple with the same problems of humanity; all religions are interested in finding the meaning of life. The resources of man can be used or misused and it is here that

*..... all religions and secular faiths are brought into a community of common concern and responsibility to build societies which realise the highest possible quality of human life.*¹⁰⁹

MERITS:

1. Humanisation in Dialogue

Thomas has chosen a meaningful theme viz. Humanisation, which can create meaningful discussions not only among Christians in India but also with other Indians. The theme is not only interesting for dialogue but responds to a dire need today. According to Devanandan Hinduism has not solved the problem of relating history with eternity; so Thomas' contribution to 'salvation and humanisation' connotes a missionary enterprise in the context of India. Though Thomas has not solved the problem, he has confronted the Indians with dialogue.

2. Humanisation in Society

Probably the most important contribution Thomas makes to Indians as a whole is by laying an axe at the very roots of false and individualistic pietism and mysticism. His anthropology comes as a good corrective to the theologies of the previous Indian Christian theologians, specially Appasamy, Sundar Singh and Chakkarai. In the name of nation building he unites not only the Christians but all the Indians together; and in the name of 'humanisation', he calls for a unity and understanding for a peaceful coexistence among the nations of the world. In pointing to a 'political God' who rules not only the Christians but every nation and race, he reminds of Isaiah; and in calling for social justice among peoples and races, he reminds of Amos.

By emphasising reason, he has given a good corrective to the general Indian emotional attitude.

3. Humanisation and the Body

By emphasising that humanity is one that it passes through a creative and redemptive process, Thomas has abnegated the individualistic attitude to salvation which is dominant in India. In India where, generally, the soul is considered to be Atman (divine) and body as its prison, Thomas has powerfully and convincingly brought out the contribution of the body in God's plan of redemption.

4. Humanisation of God in Christ

Thomas has made Christology as the central and deciding factor for anthropology.

5. Humanisation in dialectic tension

Thomas always tries to walk the razor's edge, stressing both sides of the coin: becoming and being, history and eternity, divine and human, body and spirit etc. Not finding full truth in the following five trends in modern theology viz. orthodoxy, Biblical realism, Demythologization, Dekerygmatisation and mysticism, Thomas says in a balanced way:

So far as the movement keeps the dialectical tension between objective truth (event) and subjective meaning (symbol) and is rooted in the crucified Christ as the saving act of God and emphasises the contemporary presence of its saving power in faith, it may be recognised as a relatively valid theological reinterpretation of the Christian faith. No theology can do justice to the fullness of the Gospel ; one-sidedness is inevitable in theology and does not become heretical provided it stays in dialogue with scriptural criteria and the continuum of the on-going catholic theological tradition, and functions within the community of faith as the servant of the mission of the church in the contemporary word. In fact, the theological task in any age and culture must be seen as a task involving the theologian walking the razor's edge between the biblical kerygma and the process of its demythologization with a view to remythologizing its truth and meaning for men in different climates of thought and cultural milieu, however partial the result may be.¹¹⁰

This long quotation brings out the thrust of Thomas' theology and the balanced way in which he desired to apply it to the daily way of life.

6. The Spirituality of Man

In breaking the wall between the secular and the sacred, Thomas had brought out the essential 'constitution of man'. Any human meeting convened to deal with the most material problems, cannot but take into account the transcendent implications of the material welfare. Man cannot avoid religious truths ; he is by nature spiritual. So anthropology and theology cannot be totally separated.

Man's sense of self as transcending the world around him, and his sense of God defined as the ultimate Reality who or which encounters him and calls for the response of his total self in its subjectivity, are so closely linked in the constitution of man, that man's relation to self, world and God cannot be interpreted in isolation from each other.¹¹¹

Thomas cites Pannenberg as ratifying such an opinion.¹¹²

Demerits :

Though Thomas has so many merits, he is not free from some pitfalls. As he himself has said, sometimes theology becomes one-sided ; in his interest for finding a right anthropology, he has moved far away from the theocentric aspect.

1. Thomas rightly distinguishes two emphases given by two different schools of theology today. One school emphasises the 'discontinuity of sin' and therefore the cross. This line is called by Thomas 'creation-Incarnation-Resurrection-axis'. The other school emphasises 'the process of nature and history'. In his own characteristic way, Thomas evaluates these schools, neither condemning them nor accepting one- He says :

These two theologies need to correct each other.

But both types of formulation must be judged valid.¹¹³

But if one school is valid in itself, why does it need correction ? Thomas' puzzling situation is seen here. He is groping his way into a fuller and newer theology for Indian Christians but is yet to lay the road for others to walk. He wants to bridge both sides together ; therefore he can neither accept them as they are in themselves nor invalidate either of them. It is good to bring a synthesis of two views but it fails in its attempt if the synthesis remains only as a patchwork.

2. If Thomas' analysis of man that he is 'poised between nature and spirit' is correct, how could there be a valid dialogue and cooperation between various religions and ideologies including secularistic atheism ? Will there not be a confrontation instead of co-operation when it comes to the spiritual aspect in man ?¹¹⁴

3. It would have been much easier and surer to evaluate Thomas more precisely if he had had some practical involvements in social developments, especially when he advocates the Gandhian way of Karmamarga and the Christian way of the cross.¹¹⁵

4. In his use of Barth, especially his idea of 'relativisation of all religions', it must be mentioned that Thomas has taken Barth out of his context. To Barth all religions are on the negative side i_n

comparison to Christ ; to Thomas, everyone can use anything good from any religion because all religions are relative. Barth made a theological condemnation of all religions including Christianity ; Thomas makes an anthropological appreciation of the positive contributions of all religions, including Christianity.

5. The early Indian Christian theologians like Chenchiah, Chakkarai and Appasamy have written elaborately on Christology and suggested that Christian anthropology must be based on such a Christology. Thomas has dealt with anthropology in detail and suggests that if it is not based on Christology i.e. on Christ Who is dead and risen' it will be a wrong view. Unfortunately, the former lack a clear anthropology and the latter a strong Christology. Thomas has often stated that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is of final value to an understanding of man but has not clearly explained what this means in the modern process of the 'self-understanding' of man.

6. Thomas in his controversy with Peter Beyerhaus, has established that neither anthropology nor theology matters but only Christology. This can be a dangerous statement as Beyerhaus has already said. The fact is that without a right theology there cannot be a proper Christology. Christology belongs to both anthropology and theology. But this means that both the Christian theist as well as a secular atheist can claim Jesus Christ; e.g. the D. M. K. movement in Tamilnadu, not to speak of Roy, Gandhi etc. Ofcourse Jesus cannot be monopolised by any man or group, not even by the Pope or the Church. But rightly viewing, Jesus cannot be claimed by anyone i.e. by one who does not believe in God. Christ believed in God and even on the cross He cried: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? ". There can be no meaning for the cross without a proper understanding of Jesus' belief in God. And Jesus believed in the God of the Old Testament. The concept of God must change according to the situation of man in history. But only a right concept of God can lead to a right understanding of Christ. Therefore, any attempt, as Thomas', to make christology to be independent of theology can be misused by secularistic

atheists. The Statement: Christ is truly Man must be connected with the belief that Christ is truly God; not to care for theology but only christology endangers this view. Thomss who usually walks on the razor's edge has missed his step here. Theology leads to christology but christology presupposes theology. Christology means confessing Jesus as Truly God and truly man; and if one has no idea of God or man, either in abstract or in concrete, how can he understand christology? Otherwise christology will become a higher form of anthropology which has nothing to do with theology. This is the danger Beyerhaus already was concerned of.¹¹⁶

7. Thomas does not follow the classical interpretation of Kenosis. To Marshman, Carey's fellow true divinity is not servanthood. But to Thomas, true divinity expresses itself in true servanthood because love is service. Thomas sees the resurrection already in the cross and he does not wait for the 'third day'. To Thomas kenosis is not 'emptying of divinity but of the self'.¹¹⁷

He says :

*The significance of much of the modern theological ferment lies precisely in interpreting the kenosis of Jesus not as an emptying of divinity but of the self to disclose true divinity of love.*¹¹⁸

Though Thomas does not make much use of Indian religious terminology as Chenchiah, Chakkarai or Appasamy, here he uses a term—'self'—in an Indian sense. In this context, 'self' implies something lower rather negative and egoistic; so Thomas does not mean here the Vedantic view of 'self', which is Atman, but it connotes the meaning given by Sen.¹¹⁹ Thomas and Marshman move in very different directions. To Thomas Jesus had a 'self' which He emptied and thus revealed His divinity; to Marshman Jesus was divine and He emptied His divinity to become human.

8. It is true that in Thomas' anthropology there is some narcissism. His view that man is in the process of 'self-under

'standing' is coupled with the ideas of man creating his own history and thus himself too. Though this is true to some extent, the other side of man's sinful nature must never be hidden. Especially, when Thomas thinks that morality is the aim of theology, man's weaknesses, not his strength are to be revealed more clearly. While dealing with the merits and demerits of the Marxists' view of man, Moltmann rightly and sarcastically remarks:

*To say that man is God and creator of himself sounds very grand, but makes him not the slightest bit more human.*¹²⁰

9. In the modern secularistic approach of man, which Thomas adheres to very much, the danger to replace love to God with love to neighbour is on the increase. Jesus' abridgement of the Law and the Prophets into two commandments is important; the order of this also is important. It is true that in Mt. 25, one gets the impression that service to the needy is service to Christ Himself. But this never means that such love can set aside the claim to one's love to God. Neither love to neighbour which excludes love to God nor vice versa is Christian. But love to God is deeper and more comprehensive and becomes the basis of one's love to his neighbour. Love to neighbour includes one's love to his nation, society, race, family, caste, in short everything that falls in his inner circle, thereby excluding all the rest. Therefore unless this love is conditioned and regulated by his love to God, it can and will definitely lead to a false love to the neighbour or a selfish love or group-egoism. He who loves God according to Christ's teaching, cannot but love his neighbour who is His child also.

10. Thomas deals with man much from his external point of view. He analyses the problems of industrialisation, caste, race, colour, etc., and one nation oppressing the other nation or one revolting against the other. But unfortunately he does not deal very much with the problems of the inner man i.e. the problem of man with himself¹²¹ (what Emil Brunner explains in his book on 'Man in Revolt') viz. the 'spiritual' problem which shows that man is not in peace with himself. Pang has rightly brought out this fact in his criticism against Thomas :

*On the other hand, any soteriology that is absolutely history-bound and has not even a glimpse of the supramundane vision such as Marxism, atheistic humanism and existentialism, will neither be able to satisfy the deepest longings of the human spirit nor be capable of offering real comfort or hope to those and millions of them in Asia-who find little or no justice and equality in this present world order.*¹²²

11. And naturally in his effort to bring a better order of society, which is just in itself, respecting humanness as an aim of man, Thomas has little or nothing to say on the presence and function of the Holy Spirit in man, guiding him and preserving him for eternity. Luther's definition of the third article of the creed is important. Herein he shows that man can never come to Christ without the 'enlightening, guiding of the Holy Spirit'. Thomas also has nothing to say on the grace of God, far from talking about the 'prevenient grace'. To the highly unrealistic and other-worldly religious people of India, Thomas gives, undoubtedly, a good and necessary corrective and shock but he has hardly escaped the cutting edge between the bodily-spiritual and emotional-spiritual natures of man. In his interest to guard against false pietism, he has minimised the value of bhakti in religion. A right approach to anthropology consists not only in considering man as a rational being but equally as an emotional being; neither should be sacrificed at the cost of the other. Though Thomas has taken much from Barth, he has missed this dialectical aspect in the nature of man. When man endeavours to participate in the revolution of the society, he cannot forget the value of personal prayer and meditation in the presence of God, which is given the central place in the writings of Chakkarai. Chakkarai finds the divine aspect of Christ in his prayer-life; Thomas has little contribution on these lines.

12. With regard to the relation between culture and religion, Thomas has made a good contribution. According to him the interaction between these two happens throughout history and the latter is basically influenced and shaped by the former. This is true.

But if Thomas has really incorporated this idea in his theology, he would not have stressed so much only on the cross and resurrection, as the only criterion to be Christian, as he has done.

It is interesting to note that in the history of Indian Christian Theology the balance between cross and resurrection has not been rightly kept. To Roy, the Sermon on the Mount was of paramount importance in the Life of Jesus; to Sen the important thing was Christ as the the Avatar. To Goreh, the rationality behind Christian teaching was attractive; to Appasamy the mystical moral union of the believer with Christ was important; to Chenchiah it was the new creation. Devanandan has different interests in creation, history, church and eschatology. The Indian Roman Catholic theologians were generally interested in the Advaitic pattern which does not bring out the best of the Cross of Christ and resurrection.¹²³ Only Sadhu Sundar Singh and Chakkarai have stressed the Cross of Christ; but both of them stressed the cross more than the resurrection.

Thomas could have made a meaningful and lasting contribution if he had made use of the concept of satyam (truth) in the Indian context, thereby interpreting the life of Jesus Christ as 'the way, the truth and the life'. (Jn, 14:6).

God gives life to man and therefore man is a Bhakta yogi; God gives truth to man and therefore he is a Karma yogi; God shows the way to man and therefore he is a Gnana yogi.



CHAPTER VIII

SOME DIRECTIONS TOWARDS AN INDIAN CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY FOR TODAY

INTRODUCTION

Man wants to know who he is ; but he does not want to accept all that he is. Man is a complicated being ; he is not a simple creature to be classified, analysed and put into one shelf. From time immemorial man has wondered at many things viz. nature, power, freedom etc. It is no wonder that man now wonders at himself too ; he wants to know who he is ; but the more he tries to analyse the truth about himself, the deeper he finds its abyss.

The reason for the complicated nature of man lies in the fact that he has come out with different answers from different fields of human knowledge; the philosophers on one side, the theologians on the other; to increase the tension of the problem, the sociologists, the psychologists the psychiatrists, the communists, the socialists, the humanists etc, add their views to it. Are philosophers and sociologists not men? In fact, it is not just one field of science interpreting man against another ; but they all look at man with different interests. Each field realises a dialectical nature in man. The question- "what is man?" seeks to know what he should be and what he really is. The question-why man is not what he should be? is the most perplexing one. Man is a polaric being ; he tries to hold in himself the extremes, if not the opposites. Man is the same everywhere and at the sametime man is very different from each other depending on the fact, which pole he stands nearer to. Looking from the point of view of theology, i.e. in the sight of God, he is basically the same everywhere but looking from the point of view of man, he is very different from the other.

In order to arrive at a balanced view of man, theology has to incline itself to take into consideration all the other views of man and use

them in the light of the revelation of God. Theology should not seek to build its anthropology over against the other branches of arts and sciences but try to comprehend, include and answer the puzzles that are left by other sciences. Therefore, the findings of history, arts and natural sciences need not stand in contradiction to theological view of man but may enrich its depth. Any truth belonging to any branch of human knowledge cannot and shall not be deprived of its right. The Christian concept of man, therefore, includes the findings of biological science as to how the body of man functions. The psychologists' findings on the functions of the mind in its conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious stages can enrich the concept of man. The importance of cultural studies in recent times shows the value of man in his search for self-identity, taking pride in his own tradition and cultural values. So also the contributions of secularists, humanists, communists, philosophers and even atheists could show what man is. Thus every human science tries to interpret man from its own point of view ; theology looks at man *coram Deo*. Any other human science, e.g. psychology or philosophy can ignore the findings of other branches of science e.g. atomic research, theology or sociology ; but theology cannot afford to do so. In atom research, man stands before the object of his research ; nothing comes in between. But in theology, man stands before God and in between them is the whole world under the caption 'neighbour'. Physiology and psychology explain only what man is and how he functions ; theology explains not only what man is but shows why he is so and what he should be. In order to answer this question-what he should be, one needs to take into account all the data available about man. At any rate, the Bible does not know of any distinction between science and religion ; political strategies, economic measures, cultural outbursts, history, poetry-all find a place already in the Scriptures.

What psychology, medicine etc. do, is to study man in a qualified and restricted sense. They do not look at the whole man but man in parts. These scientific studies, strictly speaking, are not wrong but only partial. Therefore, a theologian can take their findings and results and try to meaningfully relate them. Psychology and philosophy have really gone far to help theology to establish its

views. So, a negative attitude to these sciences is not at all necessary. Though there are different kinds of findings and theories in these scientific fields, a theologian must carefully sift them to ascertain what is correct or right. He may not be qualified to judge a psychologist but theologically he can find out or decide what could be the partial truth that this branch of science tries to explain. Thus there are two kinds of anthropologies: 1. the formation of the concept of man rejecting a belief in God and 2. the concept of man built on a firm belief in God.

However, a distinction between what is called 'spiritual' and 'material' is not so simple. Guinness shows how modern drugs like Marihuana, Meskalin etc. can stimulate some kind of 'transcendental' feelings in man. He cites Pahnke who had made a dissertation in theology establishing that those who take psychedelic drugs have similar experiences of a mystic. If several millions of people take to drugs today, it shows that this world of reality could not satisfy them; man seeks more than what this world of reality can offer him.¹ Thus millions are attracted towards yoga or transcendental meditation or drugs. Surprisingly enough, it is not the poor of this world, who do not get the luxuries of this world, that resort to such unreal and temporary satisfaction but it is the rich, who having been satisfied with the world's plenty, take to these palliatives. If one does not and cannot accept God or believe in Him, why does he want to flee to a transcendental sphere?

Time and distance make all the difference in making the same thing appear as good or bad. In the time of David, sacrifices were accepted as positive expressions of man but the same had a negative view in the time of Isaiah, who denounced them,² because man with his peculiar nature can pervert even the 'good' law of God into selfish gains for himself. In a theocratic land of Muslims, polygamy can be practised; but in a Christian land, it is unlawful. Thus the *Sitz im Leben* of man is one of the most important factors to be dealt with in the formation of anthropology. This Study wants to deal with man in the Indian situation, specially in the Second half of the twentieth century. Thus, Indian anthropology needs to be tackled in its *Sitz im*

Leben. Though there are many common features of man all over the world, it is the difference that gives colour and shape to his picture.

Man is a product of heredity and environment. Today man finds himself in a certain family and in a particular village or city. He is not responsible for his birth in that particular situation. He simply comes to know that he has a body which is living. He does not also know what he will be. Much of his future development is already in his birth. Modern science, with its analysis of chromosomes and genes has contributed to a meaningful understanding of man. His body structure, height, colour of eyes and even psychological characteristics and feelings are given to him. He has no possibility to reject any of them. Whether this nature of fate that much of what he will be is already decided before he has begun to act-is due to his previous birth cannot be asserted with certainty; it remains beyond scientific thinking. But one thing is certain i.e. much of what man is, is given to him.

This does not mean that man is a puppet. He is a free agent and he can shape his life as he likes. He can accept his society or go to some other place and get another fellowship. He may get the same disease of his father or mother but he can treat this disease as he likes. He may take medicine or refuse to take it. He may even get the submissive or aggressive character of his mother or father, but he is free to develop it or change it. Thus he is decided in many ways but still he is free to decide them as he wills.

The environment also shapes man to a large extent. From his birth, he hears a certain kind of vocabulary, a certain kind of music, gets to know certain kinds of people etc. He becomes acceptable in this society and all others seem to be strange to him. He goes out into the society and begins to learn in a certain method of education and learns from his society to give values to things. His culture stamps itself on his face. He tries to fit himself into this society. He cannot easily break the laws that exist in this society. If it is an

industrial society he must adapt himself to it and if it is an agricultural society, he must find in it his place. Ofcourse, man is a free agent; he can swim against the streams also. If his society uses right hand traffic he must accept it; he has no possibility to walk on the road as he likes. Man is a social being; he receives from his environment a lot of knowledge and development and at the sametime he finds himself bound by certain laws of his environment. One who is born in India must also carry the fate of his caste; caste serves, thus, on the one hand as a protection for him and recognises him as a member of that society; but at the sametime it sets a fence around him.

The Indian environment is also a complicated one. India is not one country with one culture. Unfortunately, the number of languages with its different scripts does not help the people to get to know each other. In fact there is not just one culture in India but many cultures, many languages, many peoples and many races; simultaneously India wants to be one country, one people and has got one government.

Any anthropology written for India must take into account the great influence of Hinduism because Hinduism is more than a religion. It is a system of life; it gives a structure to the society and prescribes the routine of life from birth to death through giving name, schooling, marriage, family life etc. It is difficult to define what Hinduism is. Before the Aryans conquered India, there was already a well established religion in india. Max Muller throws great light on their religious belief especially at the background of Mohanja - Daro and Harappa excavations. What happened to these people and their culture? The hypothesis is that there followed, so early, a syncretism. Sanskrit became the sacred language and both pre-Aryan and Aryan religions began to influence each other. It may be difficult to decipher the historical give and take between these two groups. However, according to Raju, that which is "inward looking", probably some elements of Bhakti, belong to non-Aryans while activistic traits belong to the Aryan culture.⁴

Benjamin Walker also traces a substantial portion of Hinduism back to the pre-Aryan religion.⁵ In the later history of Hinduism, Siva, Vishnu and Brahma became Thirumurthi; the name of the god did not matter much; behind each name, the Hindu learned to see the same Reality. Max Muller calls this kind of belief as henotheism. Thus, syncretistic elements are not the external attitude or the out come from Hinduism but its very basis, on which it was formed. M. M. Thomas' view on syncretism can be meaningfully understood at this background. Generally speaking, Indians do not find it very difficult to switch from one God to the other, provided the latter is of more help to them.⁶ It is common to find a Hindu visiting several temples, praying to different Gods for a certain favour. Thus a concept of man **Coram Deo** (before God) will have a very different meaning in India. Indigenisation becomes a 'must' in this background. It is very interesting to note what Hindus think of a christian man. Gurukul had arranged a dialogue between a leading anti-christian, politico-religious party called R. S. S. (Rashtriya Swayam Sevasangh) and the protestant Christian leaders in 1980. Some of the R. S. S. Leaders simply dubbed the Indian Christians as anti-national and as foreign elements who find themselves in a ghetto now, without any possibility to influence the other Indians.⁷

The independent India wants to control such anti-national attitudes and this could be partially seen in the legislative Bills on 'The Freedom of Religion'.

It must also be noted that modern Hinduism has taken a different attitude towards the age old principles of caste system and the theory of Karma. Dr. Radhakrishnan has contributed much towards the formation of the neo-Hinduism, with its anticipation of a 'new humanism'.⁸ Though Dr. Radhakrishnan defends the Vedic views of cast system in his book on Bhagavadgita, he envisages the emergence of a 'new man', who will no longer be confined to his class, caste or creed but be free to play his role in the situation of the world becoming one family; there will, therefore, be no longer enmity

between Indian and European or Dravidian and Aryan, black and white but they will live together and defend themselves against threats from other planets.⁹

Boyd is quite right in saying that any attempt to form a systematic theology in India must undertake two functions : 1. to avoid dealing with western problems, which arise in close relationship with western dogmatics and 2. to deal with Indian problems. For example, instead of dealing with the problems of the 'death of God' theology, one should deal with the problem of Jainism in India.¹⁰

A study of Indian Christian anthropology cannot afford to ignore the non-religious i.e. the social, political and economic problems of India too. In spite of the united India, one seeks his self-identity with pride. There is the growth of regionalism. One has just to mention the popularity of D.K., D.M.K. and A.D.M.K. Parties in Tamilnadu. One of the greatest persons of this century, who adopted all kinds of methods including violence to destroy casteism was the founder of the D.K. Party, well-known as Periyar.¹¹

Pride in one's own language and culture has led to a deeper study of self-identity. Of course, the deciding problem of India today which is basic to all parties is the problem of poverty. India is an independent nation with circa 680 million people : among them, about 300 million live below the minimum requirements (as defined by Government) of food, clothing and shelter. Is it possible to form a concept of a Christian man in India today without squarely facing this problem of poverty? 'Garibi Hatao' (Abolition of Poverty) is the watch-word of every Indian leader today. One must also keep in his mind the problems of population explosion, family planning, exploitation of natural resources, environmental pollution etc.

In such a situation, the 2.6% Christians emerge with denominational conflicts and extreme spiritual or humanistic views. Denominational differences should not get the priority attentions because a united participation becomes essential and direly needed. It is surprising to note that not the well established churches but the independent and pentecostal churches possess the highest growth rates in Madras.¹² This shows that Indian spirituality rejects giving importance to confessions or doctrines but is interested in bhakti marga

and similar streams of popular (lower) Hinduism. However, 'Schwarmerei' (Enthusiasm) in the Indian churches must be strongly opposed. Some of the independent and pentocostal churches in India show marked traits of 'Schwarmerei'.

Without exception, all Indian Christian theologians write against false pietism. A careful theologian, therefore, will always have to walk on the razor's edge and not fall a prey either to a one-sided love to a God (forgetting the neighbour) as in the case of enthusiasts or to a one-sided love to neighbour (not remembering God) as in the case of Christian humanism. Two commandments sum up the whole of the Scriptures-love God and love neighbour; and they are equally important. However, one is the cause and the other, its consequence; one is the foundation and the other, its building; one is visible and the other invisible. But what comes first and what comes after that shall never be confused. If one begins with love to neighbour, it is possible for him to end with it. But if one begins with love to God, he cannot but show it through love to his neighbour for every human being is a child of God; God has created him and God loves him, whether he is rich or poor, Christian or Hindu, black or white. Only those who do not want to love God and his neighbour are satanic. Love to neighbour is good but if it is not based on love to God, then it can be deceptive and even may turn to be selfish and sinful. Thus, unquestionably, love to God precedes love to neighbour.

The independent churches adopt better indigenous methods.¹³ Educated and rich people are rarely found in their fold, mostly people from middle class and the poor are attracted by these groups. These groups appreciate poverty as a virtue and the people rejoice in taking refuge in God Who is a Supporter of the poor. When one falls sick the pastor prays for his cure. Thus, there is less problem in taking the patient to a hospital, buying medicines etc. One need not declare his salary in a church fund register because it may be a humiliating fact for the poor; none is required to pay church fund 'according to rate'. However the independent churches get more money from its members, by way of tithe and thus can be financially independent. In spite of all these merits, they fall a prey to self-righteous attitude towards other Christian brethren and reject the ecumenical spirit.¹⁴

A belief in prayer for healing purposes makes some among them to reject medicine totally ; to them the use of medicine is sin. They create a kind of special atmosphere through spiritual songs, prayers, meditations, preachings, evangelisation etc. which keeps the world in a negative atmosphere ; they feel so separated from the world that the world becomes alien to them. They eat and drink only to keep the soul surviving. Those who accept the Gospel as they prescribe it become their brethren and those who accept the Gospel in other forms are their enemies, for whose conversion they pray. Those who go to films, dances, smoke and drink are sinners ; it is good to avoid even seeing film-posters or to hear radio. Thus in one way, they live in a ghetto. They have understood the phrase 'not of the world'¹⁵ but they have not understood the phrase 'sent into the world'.¹⁶ Their concept of man gives more emphasis to man's spirit and undermines man's body ; body is only an agent serving the spirit ; therefore, it must always be given a secondary or inferior level than the spirit. The future of Indian Christianity lies much in handling these ever-growing groups. If they cannot accept man as 'body', then Indian Christianity will only end in a bogus piety which is far from the Christian principle of incarnation because life in India is not just a denominational affair or a question of right doctrine, it is living in the midst of influential religions, and interacting with them. Thus any sketch of the concept of man can be drawn only in consideration of the place of man in his relation to other (denominational) Christians on the one hand and in his relation to the majority of their non-Christian brethren. It means a study of not only different doctrines of Christianity but a study of the other major religions of India too. Islam could rightly be called a major Religion of India, here it is not taken into account ; one reason is, that it is not culturally dominant.

A study of anthropology is not only meaningful in the Indian situation but becomes essential for two reasons. It is essential because of all the other concepts like God, sin, salvation, Church etc., the concept of man can be a fitting and interesting theme for a dialogue with other faiths. Secondly, it is essential because anthropology has not been dealt with enough either in Hinduism or in Indian Christian theology yet.¹⁷

The following paragraphs show that there is an increasing demand for a Christian anthropology specially in Indian situation. Though Christian theology based on the Bible is the same for all lands because the Bible is the same, it has to be clothed in different words and concepts, with their backgrounds, according to every language which belongs to its own culture. The twentieth century has witnessed the rise of many Indian Christians who took up the challenge of presenting Christian theology in Indian thought forms and word-expressions. The first seven chapters of this dissertation deals with seven such men who have contributed their mite to the treasury of Indian Christian theology.

All the seven theologians have had their special interests: Appasamy wanted to interpret Christianity as Bhakti marga; Chenchiah was interested in the practical Yoga of his Master C.V.V.,¹⁸ which could help a Christian to understand what 'new creation' means; Chakkarai was convinced of the importance and necessity of interpreting the message of the Cross in terms of Indian-Hindu thought forms.

Devanandan, emerging at the cross-roads of slave-India and independent India turned theological thinking in India which remained very much detached from its cultural moorings to a consideration of theology in the context of sociology. Through the new institute, CISRS,¹⁹ he had made the Christians think not only of Christ and the Gospel but the patterns of family and the nature of Hinduism with which the Christian should stand in dialogue. It was he who made the decisive turn from traditional way of handling theology in terms of doctrines to a new anthropologically-oriented theology in which the context of the people to whom the Gospel is to be preached played a dominant role; thus a study of sociology and thus anthropology was necessitated. His early death did not give him enough time to walk the road which he had shown.

D.T. Niles had his special interest in evangelism and the selfhood of the church. He also did not use much Indian religious terminology but its thought-forms. His way of presenting the Gospel can be set in the Bhakti patterns.

J.R. Chandran shows much interest in anthropology. He also combines Western theology with Indian thought forms. He is interested in a just society with economic and political justice

available for every man. In order to achieve this end, man must be conscious of his moral standards. Though Chandran has written innumerable articles, unfortunately, only a few books have come out of his hands.

M.M. Thomas stepped into Devanandan's shoes as the director of CISRS and followed his directions, though deviating according to his own interests. His main interest was neither a systematic theology nor indigenisation (as with Chenchiah and Chakkarai) but humanisation. Thus he contributed much to the concept of man. He wanted to form his concept of man in the context of the Indian political, economic and religious situation. In order to solve the Indian problems he drew freely not only from Indian leaders like R. R. Roy to Gandhi but gladly used the ideas of Western leaders like Niebuhr, Barth, Berdyaev etc. With regard to indigenisation he took more of thought forms from India than Hindu religious terminologies. This is because he saw his main role for people who were not only in the folds of the church but to all those who could find meaning and accept the death and resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ as the key and answer to all their problems.

Thus a survey of the interests of the seven Indian Christian theologians shows that their main interest lay in the fields of indigenisation, Christology, ecclesiology and missiology. The only one who has contributed much to a study of the concept of man is M.M. Thomas. He has taken an extreme view in interpreting salvation as humanisation. That means a considerable group of the seven Indian Christian theologians, at least the three-Appasamy, Chakkarai and Niles-take to the way of Bhakti marga and thus cannot accept Thomas' humanisation. It must be noted that Thomas' views come more from the layman's point of view and thus can serve as a good corrective to the theological stand of the church. Apart from Thomas only Devanandan has contributed to an Indian Christian anthropology but it remains only as a sketch. It is meaningful to note here that neither H. Wagner nor Wietzke nor Furtado who have made their dissertations on Appasamy, Chenchiah, Chakkarai, Devanandan and Niles have allotted a considerable section in their books on their anthropology. This shows that their anthropology was not a dominant feature in their writings. One could, of course, draw much of

anthropological ideas from the writings of the five but this will remain more a contribution of the one who writes the comments than a clear presentation of the authors themselves. One has to suppose or read between the lines to get their anthropology. Thus much is yet to be done in the field of Indian Christian anthropology. It is high time that Indian Christian Theologians began to think on systematic lines. The first and the only attempt, so far, towards a systematic theology for India comes from the hands of a foreigner (R. Boyd); though this attempt deserves great praise, it leans on one side viz. the Gnanamarga. But some theologians in India think that systematic theology is unnecessary ; one needs only a living theology.²⁰ A living theology is good so far as it can deal with the present problems of the society in their context. But it must also be remembered that systematic views of Barth and Brunner were not written out of context. And to systematize a "living theology" is neither wrong nor harmful but helps a better and clearer understanding. A systematic approach is a dire need in the Indian situation which is very unsystematic-economically and socially.

There is one more question to be analysed before the concept of man is taken up. What can be the basis of an Indian Christian anthropology? Appasamy has tried to answer this question in his dealing with the sources of authority and concludes that sources could be classified into four kinds in the order of the following priority: 1. Scriptures. 2. Church, 3. Reason and 4. Experience. In India, some give too much importance to reason e.g. M.M. Thomas; and some independent churches consider experience as the deciding factor of the scriptures. This cannot serve as a good Christian basis. The Bible and the Bible alone shall be the deciding factor; of course, the church, reason and experience help man to understand the scriptures correctly. But, is it possible to find out a systematic core of the concept of man from the biblical writings? Perhaps the word "man" is too general. However, one could reverse the question and ask: What are the statements in the Bible that do not concern man? All the scriptural statements are written either by man or through man or for man. The first verse of the Bible about creation is a statement through man; it is a revelation to man though it might not be his own experience. "You are saved by grace through faith" is a statement by man; it is not only a revelation, it

is also his experience. "Love your enemies" is a statement written for man because it is not only revelation from the Lord and experience of man because of man but an expected state of living.

The centre of scripture is Jesus Christ Himself. To Him no one needed to say who man was because he knew what was in man. (Joh. 2 : 23-25). This text indirectly points out the sinful nature of man. Jesus Christ came to show his love for sinners and He also died for them. It is only at the background of His love that one can judge the concept of man.

Though the nature of man is the same everywhere i.e. having a desire to acquire more and more and still remain unsatisfied (begierig), this nature finds very different expressions in different situations of the world. Though the picture one sees may be the same, it could be interpreted in different ways depending on the place from which it is seen.²¹ The glass window paintings of a church can be rightly understood only when one stands within the church towards the light. Those who stand outside the church may not understand the painted pictures correctly especially when it is dark inside the church building. Man can understand man only when he looks at him in the light of God who is love; all other methods can only give a distorted picture of man.



i) MAN AS YOGI

(or Man as Body - Spirit / Soul)

Man is a unity ; he is not to be divided into several sections. What affects one part of his body affects his whole. The word 'Yoga' stems from the root 'Yuj' or 'Yujir' meaning union or concentration. The idea 'union' presupposes a union between jivatman and paramatman. One could talk about the integration of body and mind in the Raja yoga.²² Even today the word yoga is well known in India and Indian spirituality still tries to achieve this 'union'.

From very early time man has spoken of a dichotomous nature in man-that man is a compound of two opposite natures. The Greek and Hindu thought is based on this classification of man. There are many divergent views in Hinduism regarding concepts of Grace, incarnation, monotheism, salvation etc. ; wide divergence can be found in all these concepts. But surprisingly, they all agree that man is essentially dichotomous-soul and body, Atma and Sarira. Hinduism, like hellenistic thought, has always undermined body to the spirit.^{22a} The spirit belongs to a higher realm while the body is earthly and inferior. The body is a prison of the soul and therefore salvation depends on the ability to release this soul from this body and be reunited with the Greatest soul (Paramatman).

Apart from this dichotomy, one could talk of man as trichotomous also i.e. body-spirit-soul. Modern poetry, drama, classics and even scientific studies express this trichotomous nature of man.

These age-old conceptions of the nature of man have revealed partial truth of the nature of man. Modern Christian theology emphasizes that man is neither dichotomous nor trichotomous but a

unity.²³ But what means unity ? The word 'unity' presupposes parts or sections or divisions. The concept that man is a 'unity' is not exclusive but inclusive of the natures dealt with in dichotomy and trichotomy of man. Man is a unity of body and spirit. The Indian word Yoga stands for this idea of unity.²⁴ Though by the word Yoga a follower of Ramanuja means the union of man with God, the Indian religious thought generally views that the Paramatman partially lives in the Jivatman.

Essentially speaking, in Hinduism the atman of man is not different from the atman of God in nature. Therefore one could talk of realising the atman also. The Mahavakyas could be quoted here : Aham Brahmasmi and Tat tvam asi.²⁵ Thus the main spiritual role of man is yoga and therefore he must be a yogi.

In the Bible the nature of man is graphically portrayed in the creation account in Gen. 2:7 ; "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living being." Three Hebrew terms in this verse draw our attention : Adamah, Neshamah and Nephesh. The fact that man is taken from dust and must return to dust is clear ; the fact that this lifeless dust is living because of the breath of God is to be understood ; the fact that this lifeless dust from the ground together with the life-giving breath of God has resulted into a living being with a personality of his own is remarkable.

To consider the body as antagonistic to soul or to value one as inferior or superior to the other will not only be anti-scriptural but also anti-human. Sin has not affected only one part of man-his body or soul but it has affected the whole of man. Thus, it is misleading to talk of man having a body, soul and spirit ; strictly speaking man is a unity of body, soul and spirit. The creation of man presupposes that he shall be a Yogi.

Man is Sarira

In India, one generally looks down upon Sarira (body). Sarira is considered to be evil in itself, luring the soul to sin and thus it imprisons the soul. It is a pity that man considers his own body as something alien to himself. Although this body of flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God, in this world of time, it is

given to man as a gift. God did not create man out of pure spirit but gave him an earthly body and he also found that it was 'good'. Sin cannot be attributed only to the body of man ; it belongs to the spirit of man too.²⁵ There are sins that stem out of bodily lust-e.g. stealing, drinking, adultery etc. ; but the sins of the spirit like pride, hypocrisy, envy are even worse than the other. Sin belongs to the total man. It is sinful to consider one part of man-body, as of sinful nature. Man is Sarira. The fall of man does not affect just his body but his whole nature ; so also redemption is not just for the soul but for the body too. The N.T. abounds in admonitions to present the sarira of man as an acceptable offering to God (Rom12: 1-2) and to consider the organs of the body as instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13). On the other hand this does not mean that one could consider the Adamah in itself as holy. Adamah is earthly and man should know that so far as he is in this Adamah, he always stands in danger of peril of death. He is Adamah i.e. he can never boast of himself ; man has nothing to boast of but to be cautious because this Adamah is exposing him to many forces from the outside. In some experiences of man, he can find out that he does not like his own body. Sometimes he experiences a kind of drive from his bodily desires which he does not like to execute. He hates the sins of over eating, drinking, killing etc. He does not like to do them, it hurts him after he has done them but nevertheless he does them and suffers. He must also die and go to Adamah though he does not like it. Man is not just spirit who can ever live (Is. 33:3). He is Sarira.

Sometimes the body acts against man too. It has its own weaknesses. The disciples of Jesus would have liked to keep awake and pray with Jesus in his agonizing hour. A little later Peter could even draw his sword and begin to fight for Jesus. But the disciples' "eyes were heavy" and so they did not keep awake to pray with Jesus in his time of agony and it was at this juncture that Jesus said "the Spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak" (Mt. 25:41). St. Paul draws this weakness of the body to the extreme of saying ; "I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin." (Rom. 7:25). David would not have liked to commit the sin he did ; so also Peter would not have liked to deny Jesus. Man must accept that he is weak ; he is Sarira, Adamah.

He shall always remain Sarira all the days of his life on this earth till he returns to it. But this is nothing to discourage man in his spiritual life for God's Son Himself came in this Adamah. The logos became flesh and yet this same Adamah could not corrupt Him. The word of God became Sarira and dwelt among men.

Sarira is a gift of God to man ; with it he can serve God and his neighbour and, of course, with the same Sarira, he can sin against God and man.

Chakkarai mentions about two sariras when talking about man-the sthula sarira and the sukshma sarira (the visible and the invisible body).²⁶ The Christian concept of Adamah stands for sthula sarira and the Neshamah for the sukshma sarira. It is correct that he calls both Sarira ; it clearly shows that he did not want to degrade the visible body (Adamah) against the invisible life (Neshamah). Man cannot condemn the body as a prison and still live with it and support it with food and carry out its desires. Man shall accept the body as the gift of God and learn to be a Yogi in harmonising his bodily actions according to the will of the spirit of God, because God has given not just a Sarira to man but His Neshamah also. Man must always be aware of the fact that the Sarira cannot act without the jiva or Uyir from God.

(Note : It may be possible to argue on the basis of John 2:21 that Jesus Himself had considered his body as a temple i.e. Jesus was not Sarira but Sarira is something which he lived in.²⁷ But on the basis of this one verse, all the other contexts which show that Jesus was a full man with His body with all its weaknesses and suffering cannot be denied.)

Man is Jiva

Man is Sarira ; but a sarira without jiva (life or life giving spirit) is dead ; therefore man is jiva.²⁸ This jiva of man is the Neshamah of God, the enlivening power-that which has made the ordinary, earthly Adamah live. Neshamah of God has become the spirit of man ; it is man's spirit. Though, in the OT, Neshamah is considered as Ruach, also, it is better to use the word Ruach in connection with God and Neshamah for man, although Neshamah also comes from God.

With regard to the use of this word Neshamah, there is some difficulty in translation. Neshamah is translated as 'breath' but jiva does not mean breath but 'life'. Unfortunately the word 'life' in English is an ambiguous term. It may stand for that factor which differentiates a living and a dead body or it may mean the time span of a man's existence. The Tamil (Dravidian) word 'Uyir' can give the best and nearest meaning of Neshamah ; the Sanskrit word 'jiva' also can be used. But the word jivatman is a little bit confusing because if jiva means life what does atman mean? Probably the original meaning of the Sanskrit word 'atman' comes close to the meaning of Neshamah also.

Hinduism has rightly taught that man is atman because man has the Neshamah of God. This was confused with the Spirit of God and taken to be God Himself. The word atman is also translated as 'soul' and not spirit. Thus God is Paramatman (Highest soul) and a great man like Gandhi was called Mahatman (great soul) and man is jivatman (living soul). So the confusion between life and spirit is understandable. Thus when it is said man is jivatman, it does not mean here that man is divine or that a part of divinity is in man but that man is living. Man has life and this life is a gift from God ; it is God's breath.

In OT this word Neshamah is replaced by the idea of blood. OT considers that life is in the blood. Man should not kill man and shed his blood because life is in the blood. Man has no right over others or his own life because it does not belong to him.

The closest affinity between Sarira and jiva is seen in the act of killing because if one hurts the body, simultaneously he hurts his life too.

Interestingly enough, the Jewish description of creation mentions Neshamah only for the creation of man; thus Neshamah is a distinguishing factor between man and animals. Animals also live; plants also live but they do not have the Neshamah of God ; they have a body which lives and dies. They are created through the spirit of God (Ps. 104) but do not have the Neshamah of God as man does. Mark 15:37 is to be understood at the background of Gen. 2:7. When it is said "Jesus gave up His spirit" it means Jesus gave up His Uyir to God.

Man is a special creation; he is the crown of all creations. Though half of humanity does not know OT or NT, still man can know that he is not on the level of animals. When Moses gave the commandments to Israel through the revelation of God, Hammurabi gave codes to his nation. God's revelation (special) alone is perfect ; but that man has a general revelation, inherent in himself, cannot be made null and void. Man is jivatman.²⁹ The scholastics and the 'orthodox protestant theology' have accepted and taught 'natural theology' ³⁰

There is no necessity to be afraid of accepting divine aspect in man. Man is essentially not only earthly, he is also a spiritual being. The Hindus have had this insight so early and brought out their ideas of atman.

Jesus had to face opposition when he claimed divine affinity for himself. Then he quoted the Jewish scriptures where one could read, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you;" (Ps. 82:6) (cf. Jn. 10:33-36).

Man is certainly not divine ; he has no justified claim to be like God. He is Sarira (Adamah) and his nature is earthly. However, God has vested with man, through His grace and confidence in man, divine functions. The whereof of life is purely divine. Just as God is holy, righteous, eternal etc. , so also a Living God. And God has given this life to man through His breath so that man can be a "living being".

Moreover, according to the Pharisees, God alone had the right to forgive sin. But Jesus Christ forgave sins and also gave the right of forgiving sins to His disciples ; not only to forgive sins but to bind their sins also. "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. " (Mt. 18:18)

Jesus brought out the glory of man when He said that nothing is impossible for "man who believes" (Mark. 9:23). Man can do all things but on one condition- that he can believe in God. It is quite fitting that the Reformation has brought out the magnitude of the nature and function of faith. Faith in God, that God has made man

as he is, that God continues to guide him and is interested in him, that God saves man graciously and that God is love is a power that can do all things; there is nothing that is impossible for this man of faith.

Man is a yogi; a yogi is not torn between extremes but he is a yogi who knows how to keep extremes together. A yogi is one who can concentrate on his beliefs strongly and unite the seeming extremes. Man has the difficulties already in himself, the extreme desires are found within his own nature. He is not a yogi who simply denies one nature or the other that he knows in himself but he is a yogi who accepts the extremes and finds a harmony of life in the midst of extremes. This, of course, is possible only through a right belief in God.

“What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit” (Joh. 3:6) does not mean that man becomes either flesh or spirit. It means that not Abraham’s children are those who will enter the Kingdom of God but those who have the spirit of Abraham. The word “flesh” has many meanings in the NT; here “flesh” means Abraham’s descent. In Vs. 3, “he who is not born from above” clearly brings out this idea. “The wind (spirit) blows where it wills” shows, that it is not enough to say that one belongs to Abraham but one must believe in the freedom and power of the spirit of God to do what He likes and to be obedient to Him; this is spiritual life.

In this modern technological world, man is increasingly forgetting his spiritual nature. Therefore one finds a tension between science and religion also i.e. not that science opposes the concept of God—this it does not do because it cannot prove it. But science takes away the free time of man. Earlier, man learned much more about his environment, his people, nature etc. through personal encounter and gave time for introspection and prayer. Today the busy world and all its social programmes like Television, Theatre, film, parties etc. have taken up the free time of man. In India cinema industry is the most flourishing one. Naturally one finds little time for quiet thinking, prayers and meditation,

Man is in danger of forgetting his spiritual nature through technological innovations. But he cannot do this because spiritual nature is inherent in him. He cannot but tell himself from time to time that he is good and has love for his neighbour. Man is not willing to accept the end of his life; different religions bring out this idea in different ways, e.g. Pythagoras talked of transmigration, Hindus talk of rebirth, Muslims and Christians believe in resurrection.

Man is Sarira and knows his weaknesses ; man is jiva and knows his powers. The west emphasises the sinful nature of man, while the east stresses the 'divine' aspect of man. The west does so because it is well advanced in maintaining law and order and technology has helped to further it. But India is poor in the enforcement of law ; real justice is expected not from any state, but from Karma. In fact, there were several laws for different groups. It is not right to say that east and west can never meet. It is true, they are the two poles. But in man, east and west have already met. Cross and resurrection, law and Gospel find their replica in the human Sarira and jiva.

Two Indian theologians emphasize the spiritual aspect of man. Thomas thinks that man is essentially a spiritual being.⁸¹ Appasmy's concept of Logos leads him to think that God is present in every man-Christian or non-Christian.⁸² The Gurukul research group have even accused him of finding divinity in man in his explanations of the immanence of God.⁸³

Man is Yogi

The term yogi stands here for the Christian idea of soul.⁸⁴ Chenchiah ofcourse could happily use the word yogi. Yogi is a person with his own personality ; he is an individual - a man who knows the earthly and spiritual dimensions of h's life ; a man who knows his weaknesses and his powers.

The word soul, however, evades scientific definitions. The surgeons may not be able to locate the soul in man. This difficulty, anyhow, occurs with other words like mind, emotion, intellect, reason. etc. Thus a theologian may understand the surgeon and give his body to be operated by him, though a surgeon may not understand a theologian fully. It must be noted that there are surgeons who accept the

concept of soul also. Thus the science of surgery cannot take over theology to produce a comprehensive view of anthropology but the other way round is possible. Modern medicine and psychology have contributed a lot for a right understanding of man. The soul is not an entity in itself; it is not a substance like heart or lungs. It is understandable that in the modern scientific language one would like to avoid using the term soul because of its evasive nature in precipitating itself to a short definition. In dialogue with atheists' humanists and secularists also the use of this term is not convenient. However a theologian need not feel shy of using the age old concept of soul. He has to explain it. what is a soul? This question leads to the answers or meanings in which this term was used by very early theologians and philosophers viz. Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, Origen, Augustine, Aquinas etc. Some of them (e.g. Stoics) have given a wrong view as though soul is an entity in itself, as though soul is part of man. This is misleading. The biblical view of soul means simply man *Coram Deo*. Man is made out of the dust of the earth; when God breathed into him, he became a living being (a Nephesh) i.e. he became man; he became a person. The word 'soul' could be translated as 'I' (Mk. 14:34).

Pannenberg shows how for Plato there was an essential link between the order of this world and the spiritual power which was behind it, regulating it. But to Kant, there is no essential link between the two. However, the soul exists because man is a person. Both try to establish the existence of God through their interpretations of the 'soul'. Modern philosophy does not try to prove God through the soul of man, but it stems from man's self-understanding i.e. from anthropology.³⁵

*The philosophical theology of the modern age, on the other hand, has been guided by the apprehension that there is no assured way leading from nature to God, and that therefore the whole burden of proof of the truth of faith in God falls upon the understanding of man, upon anthropology.*³⁶

In India many think that man is dichotomous, that he is body and soul; one against the other. It is true that man has material and spiritual aspects in himself. He is *Sarira* and *jiva*. But the third integrating factor, soul is not considered as man. Man means *yogi* and his life must be a *yoga*. It is not that some men have this power to

exercise yoga but everyman is a yogi. In yoga there are physical exercises and mental exercises also. To quote Friso Melzer : "Wie Mann und Frau aber aufeinander angewiesen sind, so auch Verstand und Geist, so auch tathaftes Handeln und innerliche Schau, so auch Aktivität und passivität."⁸⁷

There can be no man who is either purely materialistic or spiritualistic ; God has created man in such a way that man can live in this world as a being, acceptable in his sight. He remains no longer Adamah or Neshamah as soon as both become one ; man is a Yogi. Yogi, on the other hand, does not mean that he has thrown off the Adamah and Neshama. Man is a unity ; he is Adamah-Neshamah/Nephesh, Sarira-jiva/yogi.⁸⁸ Yoga means acting spiritually through body or acting bodily through spirit. He is a yogi who does not any longer differentiate his body from his spirit ; he is not body/soul-man but body-spirit/soul-man. The Gita has advocated Yoga as a necessary way of salvation. And Sri Aurobindo also has taken over its threads and woven the cloth of integral yoga. But the former treated body and soul as separate entities : e.g. He who kills the body does not affect the soul. Aurobindo also considered man as dichotomous and not as trichotomous-unity. And of course, matter shall not be considered evil in itself. Matter also is a God-given gift.

Jesus Christ's view of man is neither that he is dichotomous nor that body is evil. "There is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him ; but the things which come out of a man are what defiles him." (Mk. 7: 15)

Jesus cared not only for the soul of man by showing him the way of salvation or by dying for him on the cross. He took care of the body of man by feeding him, by healing him, by weeping for him etc. He repeated the golden guidance of the OT to man : if he wants to love God and his neighbour, he should do it with all his heart, all his mind and all his soul. (Mt. 22:34-40). The greatest danger in Bhakti movement is that the soul is considered higher than the body; real bhakti to God and to man cannot afford to do so. The verse 'Man does not live by bread alone' (Luk. 4:4) clearly shows that man lives by bread also but it wants to show that man does not live by bread only.

Man is a polaric being ; he is dialectical in nature, the important factor in man is not that he has freedom or he is free to choose ; it is more than that i.e. it is the basis of his nature that he cannot but choose. He cannot live a simple life by doing whatever he wants. He thinks before he does anything. This is what distinguishes him from the other creatures who live a simple life ; they eat when they want and sleep when they so desire. But man cannot do everything he likes to do. He lives in two realms, the earthly and the spiritual. He possesses the higher senses of justice, love etc. God has given His Neshamah to man; man is not just adamah. He is a person who knows the value of matter and spirit. He has no right to take off the breath of God that is in him ; so also he has no right to condemn his body.

And most unfortunately, man also knows that inspite of all his powers to decide he cannot choose life, he cannot save himself, he cannot decide his relationship with God. This is because he knows his weaknesses. Man thinks that he can control his body and spirit ; but very often he finds pitiaibly that he is ridden by one of them. This dialectic nature will of course remain in man till the end of his life. So, he knows that salvation is the sheer gift of God. Inspite of man's weaknesses, God offers to be related to him ; salvation means right relationship with God.⁸⁹

"Every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit." (Mt. 7:17). This does not mean that man can be compared to a sound or bad tree. There is not such man in the history of this world except the God-Man Jesus Christ. It only means that good sources or good intentions bring forth good deeds. The context reveals Jesus' warning against false Bhakti i.e. to separate the spiritual from the material, the inward from the outward. Therefore Jesus warns against false prophets who come in sheep's clothing and people who call on the Name of the Lord but do not do His will (Mt. 7:15-23). In the sermon on the mount Jesus Christ is tracing evil acts to their origins ; so murder begins with anger ; adultery starts with a lustful look etc. (Mt. 5). Modern state can judge only the act but religion goes back to the origin of that act and thus tries to set right the origin of an act. There can be only one good intention for all good actions i.e. to believe in God ; unless

one stands in right relationship to God, he cannot bear good fruits. This is what John is explaining through the metaphor of vine and the branches (Joh. 15) that any one who does not abide in Jesus Christ cannot bring forth good fruits.

In the Indian Christian theology, unfortunately, those who have chosen the Bhakti way, have not made much use of yoga. But Chenchiah has centred his views of salvation in the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the practical yoga of Master C. V. V. He, however, rejected the Bhakti marga.⁴⁰ Chakkarai talks of man as a person ; his personality depends upon the co-operation of his body and mind.⁴¹ Niles, of course, very often uses the phrase body, spirit, soul for man. He even classifies the people into 3 groups ; those who are interested in earthly values, those who are interested in transcendental values and others who are interested in God.⁴² Yoga is not a method through which man works for salvation ; Yoga stands for the way of life of a human being and therefore in this sense every man who is a living-body is a Yogi.



ii) MAN IS IN RELATION TO GOD MAN AS A BELIEVER (Bhakta Yogi)

Introduction: Yogi, here, is to be understood in the light of the last chapter where it is explained that the term stands for man. Bhakti can be understood here as faith in God, though it has various shades of meanings (devotion, piety, love etc.). Man can be man only if he believes in God because man exists *coram Deo*. But how does man get the knowledge of God? Is there any image of God in him? Is God's image destroyed because of man's sin? How does man come to know God inspite of the fact that he is a sinner?

The creation account clearly says: "So God created man in his own image, In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Gen. 1:27).

Man is created in the image of God. The concept *Imago Dei* was explained in very different ways in the history of Christian dogmatics. It stood for the human figure, man's erect position, authority over other creation, his conscience, his reasoning power etc. But it is more meaningful to understand *Imago Dei* as relationship.⁴³ Relationship means two factors:

1. the nature to relate oneself to the other
2. the nature to be related to another.

God's nature reveals both these aspects; the nature of God is essentially a relationship. He is willing to be related with man and is willing to receive man's relationship also. The whole of creation is an outcome of this essential nature of God that He did not like to be alone but be related, or be a relative to another. Thus God is Father, Mother, King, Shepherd etc. God created

man in this nature of relationship i.e. in His Image. But unfortunately man rejected to be related to God and rather chose to be related with the World which he could manipulate to some extent. With God, he always came only as the second in relationship and not as the first. Therefore 'He wanted to be like God' and thus rejected God's relationship in which he could be the giver, the initiator and the leader.

Any relationship, in order to be a perfect relationship, needs reciprocity. Therefore, it is clear that when man rejected God's relationship, the relationship was broken i.e. the imago Dei was lost or distorted. Thus in one way, one could talk of a loss of the imago Dei in man, because any relationship of man with the world which does not recognize his real relationship with God as such can only be a false or bogus or pseudo-relationship. But on the other hand, God did not leave man to get away from His relationship. He still wanted to be related with man in order to show what relationship means. He promised the fallen man, that the fall is not the end of their relationship but will lead to a "meeting again". The Neshamah of God remained in man and God did not take it away from man. Though man went out of the presence of God, God's Presence followed him wherever he went. Thus the relationship exists in the sight of God; Imago Dei is not lost in God's sight. He is still, as ever, related with man. If man could only know this and accept His relationship, he will be a Bhakta because a Bhakta is one who believes in God. Bishop Newbigin compares the Imago Dei to the reflection of the moon in the disturbed waters of a pond.⁴⁴ Thus the image of the moon is in the pool, though one cannot see it because of the disturbed nature of the water. Man can still realise God's image in him if only he believes in Him. if only he can be still.

Everybody who believes in God, irrespective of any religion he belongs to, believes that man is a 'spiritual being'. This expression 'spiritual' is very ambiguous and is used in very different ways. From a Christian theological point of view, it actually means that man is Imago Dei that man is spiritual means that man stands in relationship to God. This 'spiritual' nature of man can be seen in many of his experiences.

Spiritual means that man, inspite of all material satiation, does not find the satisfaction ; there is something he is still looking for. It also means that he does not understand himself to be perfect inspite of the increasing laws and law systems (in fact, laws have only showed that man is imperfect). Spirituality contains in that aspect of man that he is not satisfied except with perfection, not only in himself but in his society too.

Spirituality does not specify this dissatisfaction in man only, but it is this very negative impulse in man that drives him and his society to seek improvement. Spirituality means that man does not and cannot live a static life ; this is a main difference between man and the animals. Animals can live by eating, drinking and giving vent to their instincts. But man cannot live like this ; he is always improving, porgressing, trying to live newly- in a new way. There is something that is intrinsically "good" (life) in man which does not allow him to be at peace with material prosperity. He cannot but seek perfection. This does not, however' prove the existence of God. Philosophers identify this perfection with Goodness, Truth, etc.; communists identify this with economical justice, socialists and capitalists think of it in terms of freedom but man is still marching toward this goal ; he has not attained it.

Strictly speaking, this intrinsic nature in man may not be called 'Goodness' but spiritual because in himself man cannot achieve good except that he believes in the existence and support of a spiritual power viz. God ; he who does so is a Bhakta ; he stands in relationship to God. image does not mean a substance or quality but a relationship ; that man can stand in a two way relationship and responsibility to God is the sum and substance of the meaning of spirituality.

There is a general impression that people in the East are more spiritual ; but spirituality is not a quality of man in the sense of possession ; it connotes only a relationship with God. Boyd quotes the Roman Catholic monk Swami Abishiktananda to say that 'reason and logic' play greater role in western Christianity whereas Indian spirituality does not like to give so much importance to these aspects. Organisational aspects in the western

church is well appreciated and also the role of reason in theological thinking. Citing Abishiktananda Boyd writes; "Yet to the Hindu, he adds, those 'externals of religion' have 'nothing to do in the last resort of spiritual life, with moksha or salvation'. This is true."⁴⁵ Of course, Hinduism makes too much of this 'Spirituality, of man to such an extent to forget the other side, his weakness. quoting Mahabharatha, Radhakrishnan writes: "I tell you this, the secret of the Brahman: there is nothing higher than man." Radhakrishnan, later, talks of man's 'fallibility' and 'self-seeking' nature also in the context of man occupying the highest position in a democratic pattern of society.⁴⁶

It is a burning question whether man can be 'spiritual' without the special revelation in Jesus Christ. It is a pity that Barth answered it with a flat no. Early Lutheran theology has followed the pattern of God-man- Jesus Christ in the Dogmatic outline; unfortunately some Lutheran theologians, being influenced by Barth, have changed the order of outline to read God-Jesus Christ-man; the early Lutheran view helps one to form a Christian theology in a non-Christian world.

Man is not an animal, even the man who does not know or has not heard the name of Jesus Christ. Man can come to a knowledge of God even without knowing anything about Christianity. The only difference will be that his knowledge of God cannot be perfect. In the Bible, Cornelius stands as a model for such a man. He was a Yogi and he was a Bhakta and when the Holy spirit was given to him, he also accepted Baptism (Acts. 10). St. Paul talks very clearly in Roman's 1st chapter that every natural, godless and unjust man also can have the knowledge of God because "God has showed (revealed) it to them". (v. 18, 19).⁴⁷

Two of the Indian Christian theologians, correctly perceiving the position of an Indian Christian, living among many Hindu Bhaktas with all their deep 'religiosity', have affirmed the doctrine of general revelation.

P.D. Devanandan accepts God's revelation to Hindus also.⁴⁸ Appasamy goes to the extent of saying that Imago Dei is not the monopoly of Christians alone but Hindus also are in the Imago Dei.⁴⁹

It is interesting to note that the W.C.C. meeting at New Delhi 1961 compared Jesus Christ to the great light while accepting the fact that there are many other smaller lights also in the world.

Sin

A fitting Indian word to denote sin is yet to be found. The usually used word is Papa ; but this word inclines more to the idea of fate (Schicksal) rather than rebellion. Some Indian theologians use the term Karma as that from which Jesus came to redeem man e.g. S.S. Singh and this word also inclines more with the idea of fate rather than man's personal crime against God and man. In India one has to be careful in using the term "Karma" to denote sin because Karma has both positive and negative aspects. Negatively it denotes the 'fate' of man but positively it stands for the Dharma. Raju says, '...and this karma is the same as Dharma'.⁵¹ However, the fact that in Jesus Christ, the sting of Karma is broken, must be clearly set forth.

Only a Bhakta can commit sin ; he who does not know himself, as Bhakta can only do crimes like stealing, lying etc. Only the Bhakta, man *coram Deo*, can know the nature of sin and its gravity because he judges his actions in the sight of God. The root of all crimes is sin i.e. incurvatus in se i.e. to look at man himself and not at God. Selfishness, thus, is at the very root of all perversions because selfishness recognises the self as of highest importance more than the neighbour or even God. Any crime against the neighbour, automatically, is a sin against God.

A man who thinks he has become perfect cannot be a Bhakta. Most of the independent churches in India make much out of "crimes" like drinking, dancing, revelling that one easily experiences a time when he is 'perfect'. The adult/immersion baptism helps this idea very much, because after baptism one is supposed not to commit sin at all. And some think that they can live so. This is more dangerous than even the actual acts of crime because he who commits a crime can get pardon through punishment or confession ; but he who thinks that he does not commit sin (like the Pharisee, Luk. 18:9-14) remains in his blindness (Joh. 9:41) and does not get the joy of forgiveness.

How is sin committed? When man commits a crime is it only his body that is active in the act or the whole of man? Can Uyr or life (Neshamah) commit sin? Does man commit sin only because of a desire in his heart for the wrong or due to hatred only? Or, can other factors also contribute their role to an individual's act of sin? Man is a yogi; just as it is dangerous to consider man as a unit and not as a unity, so also equally it is wrong to ascribe one act of man to one aspect of his existence. It is a wrong question to ask whether the body or the spirit commits sin because man is a yogi, a unity of body and spirit. Whether the spirit can commit sin or not, it accepts the consequences of the act, thereby accepting its responsibility and participation in the act.

It should also be noted that it is not only the individual who is responsible for the total nature of a crime; usually many factors, many individuals contribute to a particular crime. Sin takes its hideous nature mainly because of its corporate nature. The narration of the fall of the first man (Gen.3) clearly shows that several factors like the deceptive speech of the serpent, the luring presence of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, contributed to the tasting of the fruit by Adam and Eve.

Since man is a product of heredity and environment, both these factors contribute not only to his nature but to his actions too. Man sometimes does that which he is not willing to do. There is something that comes right from his birth which contributes to his actions. Christian theologians, thus, talk of the double-sided nature of sin-the 'Schicksal' and the 'Schuld' (fate and crime).⁵² So, the idea of Karma stands not only for the total actions of man, his Schicksal, but its cause also: Therefore one talks of Jesus Christ redeeming man from his Karma; here Karma stands not only for man's personal acts but the contribution of others to it also.

Sometimes theologians talk of bodily sins and spiritual sins. Some think that only the body can commit sin and the 'divine soul' in man remains unaffected, not responsible for the act at all. But such a kind of distinction between bodily sins and spiritual sins is dangerous.⁵³

Sin has two natures: an open act and a concealed act (Corresponding to the first and second uses of the Law). The secular world punishes all kinds of crimes from juvenile delinquency to murder. Thus the state takes care of the first use of the Law. Perhaps one may hide a sin from the eyes of the law of the state; though he is considered blameless, he himself knows that he has cheated the society and the law itself. But he cannot cheat either God or himself. Open sins are, therefore, far better than such concealed sins for when one openly sins, he gets its punishment from the society, and if he does it without the knowledge of the society, he has no possibility for punishment or forgiveness. Adam and Eve did commit sin; they were punished for it when they accepted their act but they were promised forgiveness. But the serpent committed a concealed sin (it is difficult to say what exactly was wrong in the words of the serpent except its intention) and therefore its head must be crushed; it does not stand the grace of forgiveness.

The greatest sin Jesus always fought against was hypocrisy (Luk. 11:44) "Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgement." (Joh. 7:24). Man can show himself and act in such way that one cannot see him i.e. one can hide himself through his words and acts. Usually speech and acts are instruments of revelation. But man can make it upside down. Humble acts may find their source in a proud heart: paying 'tithe' may not be out of love or justice but from self-righteousness (Luk. 11:42). The Law is important, but love is more important; one should fulfil the former but without neglecting the latter (Luk. 11:42). Hypocrisy is the end product of keeping Sarira and jiva in an unharmonious union.

Fear is another source of sin. In the parable of the stewards (Mt. 24:14-30) the last steward did not make use of the money but buried it 'out of fear. The parable shows that all men are not equal. God has given more to some and less to others. But one thing is clear; He has given to everyone. The Parable has not mentioned about stewards who have misused their talents. Misuse will be condemned; but equally this kind of non-use is to be condemned. Fear is the opposite of faith. If a Bhakta is in fear,

then his faith is in jeopardy. And the different grades among men also get a divine sanction ; it belongs to the order of creation. Fear is a product of man.⁵⁴ He who fears shows that he considers himself mainly as Sarira and not jiva. He who is a yogi casts away unnecessary fear.

According to Jesus Christ a sinner is one who loves those who love him and does good in reciprocity. "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same,..... But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return." (Luke 6:32-36)

Thielicke clearly brings out the double aspect of man. Man, appearing to be very lofty engages himself in an act of humanisation, having his own ideas. When his view clashes against the 'Schicksal' of the world events, he gets angry against God and this turns out to be wrath against his neighbour. Thielicke explains this beautifully in his exposition of the story of Cain.⁵⁵ Man is certainly not what he looks like. No one can understand him, not even he himself, except God. Why was Cain's sacrifice not accepted? The Bible just narrates the tragedy. It does not give any reason. Thielicke goes behind the screens to discover the cause of this tragedy in the hidden nature of Cain that he as the 'first-born', always wanted to be in the front and to decide others' way. Thielicke calls it Cain's "Self-conformation".

In the Tamil culture, sin can be seen in two aspects-internal and external. The first division (Ahanilai) deals only with the ethical requirements in terms of sex, more precisely, the relation between husband and wife. The second division (Puranilai) deals with relations towards neighbours. It is interesting to see that in Tamil culture the sixth commandment alone was given so much importance as against all the other six.⁵⁶

The most interesting aspect of sin is that only those who want to live in close connections with God talk of themselves as the 'first' or 'greatest' of all sinners. This means only those who accept love as the principle of life experience their 'sinfulness' and not those

who accept the law. Therefore one has to be careful to know the sinfulness of the sinner. Thus there are two kinds of sinners : Those who commit crime and those who feel that they lack love. To say that Paul was the 'foremost of all sinners', therefore X or Y is not so much a sinner, reveals a lack of understanding of the nature of sin, St. Paul is talking about in that context (I Tim. 1:15). In India one does not stress the sinful aspect of man and in the west the 'divine' aspect of man is not stressed. But the east does not deny that man is a sinner nor does the west fail to affirm the 'divine' aspect of man through the concept of the Imago Dei in man; reason in man is sometimes considered 'divine'. The Reformer, Martin Luther, following the lines of Augustine, has clearly brought out the total depravity of man. To him man is a sinner; reason which was considered to be royal, sovereign and even 'divine' remains only as a perverted faculty of man; man cannot in any way save himself or come to the knowledge of God save through the Grace of God in and through Jesus Christ. Luther says: "So ist denn der Mensch ses Lebens Gottes blober Stoff zu dem Leben seiner kunftigen Gestalt," (These. 35)⁵⁷

The reformation has brought out the importance and value of faith to the day light. It is really unfortunate that faith went into the background in the 15th century so much so that one could live as if through works alone (Karma Marga). Reformation clearly brought out the fact that Karma marga alone without being grounded in the Bhakti marga, (way of faith in God) will only be a way of man and not the way of God; it will only establish the might of man and not his total dependence on God; it will thus lead to a world of men and not to God's world. Thus Luther broke all that was based on pure human endeavour and made man the being totally dependent on God. He used the concept of faith as his best instrument to demolish the Babel (work) of man. He opined that there shall be several languages in which the word of God is to be translated so that all people can understand the Gospel and come to the faith. So he translated the Bible into German which holds its appreciation till today. The one sovereign language, Latin, which remained almost as 'divine' language, thus split into several languages to reach the ends of the earth.

Though Luther found that the image of God in man was totally perverted, still he found that inspite of that situation, man can come to a belief in God ; man can have faith. The concept of faith was all-embracing for him. Man can do all things, if only he can believe in God (i.e. be a Bhakta). Man is no longer man, if he cannot believe in God. Man may do all kinds of works but will finally only glorify himself. Thus it will lead to a *theologia gloriae* and not to a *theologia crucis*. Only when man believes in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and considers himself as of nothing, he can be saved. Thus the concept of faith substituted that which was 'divine' in man during the reformation ; man rejoiced himself to be a believer. However faith is also not man's own work. All that is man's work is and can only be perverted. Therefore salvation and in addition, faith, is also a gift of God (Hebr. 12:2). Just as one thought of the *Neshamah* of God in man and later of *Imago Dei* in man, so the reformation thought of faith. So it is not enough that man is a *Yogi*, a living being but he becomes a *Bhakta*, a man who believes in God. Faith is not a human work ; it comes from God ; it is Gods gift to man.

To say that body alone is the cause of sin in man, is to degrade man, even humanity, because man is body. To accept that man is a sinner is to give respect to man. If one can see his weakness there is possibility for repentance ; if one sees only his powers it can lead only to self-complacency. If one sees a most beautiful castle which lacks a door to enter in, what kind of comment can be made on that ? Man can be compared to such a castle without a door. When one wants to write an anthropology, shall he emphasize the pitiable fact of the doorless nature of the castle or shall he just talk about the multistories of the castle, its beautiful architecture, castle-moat etc. etc. If one does not talk about the weakness of man, but only talks about his greatness, man will never get away from his weakness. So Advaita offers little prospect to improve humanity. In fact one shall neither accept one and deny the other or emphasise one and neglect the other, but man is equally in two realms.

Neither the sinful aspect of man nor the spiritual aspect of man shall be undermined-one against the other. In the Indian situation

it is very important that man realises not only his spiritual aspects but his sinful aspects also.

Thus the greatest sin of man is to disbelieve in God (Rom. 14:23); to disbelieve that God has created man as Sarira-Jiva-Manusha ; to disbelieve that God has no relationship with man etc. ; of course all these could be summarized in the statement : sin is to disbelieve that God is love.

The Gospel

The Christian Gospel takes different forms and adopts different methods in India. Gospel means good news. Since there are very poor and very rich people in India, the same Gospel has to be proclaimed in different ways. To the rich, it is to be given in the form of intellectual knowledge ; but to the millions of poor who live with less than one Rupee per day, this intellectual knowledge does not come as good news. James has rightly pointed out that such a poor man who has had no proper food, needs food before he can receive the good news of God (James 2:14-17). Human need precedes spiritual conversion. Love ought to be the basis of law and not vice versa. So Jesus Christ also defended the disciples, when they were accused by Pharisees for plucking corns on a Sabbath (Mt. 12:1-8). Observance of Sabbath, that is, keeping of law is not more important than feeding a hungry man. Man is worried about the law of God-how to keep Sabbath, and in the minute observances of it ; but Jesus wants to understand the spirit, that stands behind the law. Hunger of man needs immediate attention more than the keeping of the Sabbath for Jesus Christ. Thus Jesus Christ sets the justice of God under the love of God, i.e. God's justice is to be understood in terms of His love and not vice versa. Today one does not face this problem except in Seventhday Adventists congregations because Government decides the weekly holiday. But in some churches, the place of law is taken over by confessional statements. Creed and confessions ought not to become a law which does not care for a hungry man. The Gospel is the connecting factor of law and love. The Gospel, in a nutshell, is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (II Cor. 5:19).

Thus the greatest truth of Gospel lies in the fact that God became man. In and through this act of incarnation, God revealed His love for man. To state the Gospel in its simplest terms is that God is love. That God is love, that He loves man, that He redeems man, that He wants to be related to man-is the sum and substance of the Christian message.

The Gospel consists not just in the Word of God only but in the Deed of God in Jesus Christ. In the Indian situation in which people long to be freed from the bondage of Karma, the Gospel of God's love is seen in the breaking of this bondage. God was in Christ reconciling the world, - as He hung upon the cross, as the veil in the Temple at Jerusalem was torn, as the law of Karma was once and for all declared ineffective - accepting men who desire to be related with Him. For in Christ, the theory of Karma finds its end. In Him, God has set the whole law of retribution (Is. 53; II Cor. 5:21, 22.). The law of Karma ought to have protected Jesus from the agony of the cross because He lived a selfless life, , even a sinless life, through His intimate contact and uninterrupted relation with God. But Jesus, as a real Man, was willing to forego His right to the theory of Karma and die on the Cross for the sake of many because of His love ; and in this Act, the law of Karma had lost its sting. Of course, it does exist ; but on those who believe in Jesus Christ and in His vicarious suffering, it cannot execute its might. In Christ's death on the cross, God has freed all those who come to believe in the love of God. The law of Karma exists but only under the judgement of God. Therefore, God's Word and His Deed is to be proclaimed to all in order that they may be freed from the fetters of the bondage to Karma and start a new life, even a life where not a law of retribution but a law of love is at the centre. Thus the Gospel consists in the Person of Jesus Christ and in His Deed.

Salvation

Man is a Bhakta means a belief that he is created by God, that his sarira - jiva - yogi is God's creation, that he stands in a special relation and responsibility to God different from all the other creation and that man shall recognize his failures before God. This

is true. But more than all these is the joyous fact, that a bhakta knows ; he knows that God, out of His sheer love, has condescended to accept the weak, failing, unworthy, sinful human being as His child, thus making him heir in the Kingdom of God. Man no longer needs to sit with his hands supporting his cheek but rejoice in the fact that he is accepted by God. God has graciously forgiven his sins; man need not have a bad conscience. He is no more alone he is inseparably related to God through Christ. And this joy of salvation is the result of God's love revealed in the sending of his son Jesus Christ in the form of man. Man does not need anything more. He has attained the purpose of his life ; the goal is won. Man, the yogi, has become full-fledged bhakta. The whole world looks totally different to this bhakta who has attained his mukti (salvation). It is like Kopernican revolution in his life. So far it was he who was at the centre of the cosmos but now he has realized that God and God alone is at the centre, around Whom he is revolving like a satellite.

The greatest proof of salvation is to be found in the joy of the bhakta and, at the sametime, his acceptance that it is no longer he who stands before God alone but that he is related to the world through God. Attaining mukti means a change in the order of man-God-world relationship. He who is not saved thinks that the world is an enemy, sarira is an enemy, that he is related only to God. Bhakti becomes Mukti when man realises, through the Grace of God, that the world is not thrown behind God but comes in between God and himself. There can be no mukti which is selfish i.e. man accepting God, or God accepting man without any consideration for the neighbour. Unless the two-way traffic of a bhakta becomes a three-way relationship of God-man-neighbour, there can be no mukti. The concept of salvation must lead to a concept of the church, otherwise there is something wrong in the idea of salvation. It is possible to say that Chenchiah understood salvation in personalistic terms and therefore did not find much importance for the church. But there is no individual make the church. Therefore salvation means conversion of individuals salvation which cannot accept the corporate salvation ; individuals for the conversion of the society. Bonhoeffer is quite right in emphasising this common aspect over against Bultmann's view.⁵⁸

But one question still remains : how can one be saved ? What should a man do in order to be saved ? Does the way of salvation lie in Karma marga or Bhakti marga or Jnana marga ?

To the Yogi-man, the scriptures point out that almost nothing is impossible if he can believe i.e. man can do anything, whatever he wants. But there is only one thing that is impossible for man i.e. to save himself. When the rich young man, turned his back to the answer for his question (How can I inherit eternal life ?) with sorrow, the disciples were surprised at Jesus comment on the rich and asked him : "Then who can be saved ?". The reply was crystal clear : "With men it is impossible but with God, all things are possible." (Mk. 10:23-27). Salvation is a sheer gift of God-*sola Gratia*. No one can merit salvation in any way ; none can do enough work in order to achieve salvation. Of course, this does not mean, therefore, that one should avoid praying to God because it may lead to salvation or one should avoid going to church, reading Bible, fasting etc. All these acts show man's desire and his work but they cannot compel God to forgive all his sins. Crimes are sins which one commits against his neighbour ; no one can commit a crime against God because God is not so weak as man that He has to undergo insult by man ; man is not more powerful than God to commit a crime against Him. The only thing a man can do against God is to deny His existence. Thus disbelief in God is the root of all crimes. God has no possibility to forgive this man because he simply does not believe in Him. The man who believes in God also cannot compel God to forgive him ; in fact, even man cannot compel man to forgive his crimes. But that God forgives is His freedom. God is freedom, therefore, He forgives ; salvation is *sola Gratia*.

Salvation is not a possession. Some think that salvation must be realized at a particular date and hour. This leads to wrong concept of Salvation. Salvation may begin at a particular time in a man's life when he comes to a right belief in God and this changes his life to that extent that he cannot forget that hour. But such a conversion may not happen in everyman's life ; for many it is a procedure ; slowly they come to this conversion experience, step by step. This is also conversion and they also are saved. But none dare say that salvation is only an event of the past in his life. Jesus Christ has

clearly said, "He who remains till the end will be saved" (Mk. 13:13). In fact salvation belongs to past, present and future : any separation of these three aspects or confusion of the three will lead to a wrong view of the Christian concept of salvation (Eph. 2:10 ; Rom. 8:24 ; Phil. 2:12 ; II Thess. 2:13).

As long as man is in his Sarira, so long as he is Sarira, he is liable to fall ; any fall in man's belief that God is love, throws him out of his relationship with God. Thus man lives as a weak human being-all the days of his life, ever in need of God's guidance and grace and at the sametime he has the promise and eternal life from God Who is love. A Bhakta is simul justus et peccator; any denial of this fact will result in a totally wrong anthropology. The most important factor in man's life, therefore, is that he stands in need of daily repentance. Man must grow in his relationship with God day by day : otherwise it is not a dynamic relationship but a static one ; a static relationship is a dead one but a dynamic one is a living relationship. Man must live as a Bhakta in full consciousness of the three dimensional aspect of his mukti. Salvation stands for God ; God is salvation (Ps. 27:1) and man comes to salvation through faith. Faith is also a gift of God; man may come to faith at the very end of his life (a thief crucified along with Jesus) or when he is young (John, the disciple) or when he is in his mother's womb (Ps. 22:9.10).

Prayer

Man is a bhakta means, that prayer is very important in a man's life. The only Indian Christian theologian who gives the right importance to prayer in his writings is Chakkarai. He goes to the extent of delineating Jesus' divinity to his way of prayer life.⁵⁹ It is interesting to read in the Gospels that in the midst of heavy works, Jesus went to pray (Gethsemane). It was Jesus' habit : "very early, as it was still dark, He got up and went to a lonely place to pray." (Mk. 1:35). The most important thing to observe in prayer is that prayer ought to function like the breath⁶⁰ of man. Man *coram Deo* means man in prayer. There is a great danger in prayer also i.e. if it is made in order that others know of it. Prayer is to be made to God who is in secret i.e. secretly. (Mt. 6:6)⁶¹ This does not

prohibit corporate worship and prayer and specially intercessory prayer. Prayer reveals an essential element in man i.e. his total dependence and belief in God; it is also a recognition that the destiny of the world is not dependent on man's works but on God. Salvation should not be transferred to humanisation only but it should remain salvation. Man can try to correct himself to be man; this is not unimportant. But man shall not forget that it is God and God alone, who can give salvation to man. Man's aim shall not stop with humanisation, but always look to and be decided by salvation from God.

Church

This leads, naturally, to the corporate aspect of salvation. Unfortunately, in India, Bhakta is an individual and Bhakti marga is individualistic; even Karma marga and Jnana marga have more scope for corporate aspect. He who believes in the fatherhood of God has to believe in the brotherhood of man. A bhakta, who has received the joy of salvation shall not keep it for himself alone but share it with others. It may happen that thieves can have a better functioning unity than saints but in the kingdom of God there will be no thieves. To believe that God is love and to enjoy that love means a renewed life in Christ, where one bears the burden of another, forgives the other, edifies the other, suffers for the other, lives as a man for others and even lays down his life for the other. St. Paul emphasises corporate aspect of living as an indication of one's faith (I. Tim. 5:8) i.e. to take care of one's family and relatives is of great importance. According to Paul, he who does not do so has denied his faith or is even worse than he who does not believe in God at all. So true faith is that which reveals itself in taking care of the needy.

When bhaktas gather in Christ's Name, they shall be two, three or more. So the life of a bhakta cannot be lived in God-man relationship but God-man-neighbour relationship. Jesus promises to be there, not where one gathers in His Name but where two or three are gathered in his Name. There can be no other Name that unites man except the Name of Christ; neither language nor nation, nor caste nor ideologies can unite Bhaktas together because the united life of the saved Bhaktas does not explicate *theologia*

Gloriae but *theologia crucis*. The church remains militant and not triumphant so far as it exists in this world.

Holy Spirit

God, the Holy Spirit, lives in the Bhakta who has the joy of salvation. He is not only enlivened by the Neshamah of God but also by the Ruach of God. The spirit of God dwells in Him.

The powerful idea of God as immanent is lost in many of the established churches in India. The Pentecost day gets the least attention among the celebrations of the churches. The reason for the success of the independent - pentecostal churches is due to the view of the immanent God; charismatic movements remind the churches of their lacuna. Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard and existentialist theologians tried to bring this concept to the forefront. But Barth has given a great blow and almost buried any revival of the concept of the immanent God. Indian religions are built more on the concept of the immanent than on the transcendent God. Both facts are important and the polarity must always be maintained. Among the Indian Christian theologians only Chakkarai (Antaratman) and Appasamy (Antaryamin) have lavishly contributed to this field.

In reality man's contact with Christ begins with the initiation of the Holy Spirit. Before man knows anything of Christian religion, he first comes into contact with the Holy Spirit, Who reveals Christ to him through the scriptures. Unless the Holy Spirit makes the scriptures meaningful, none can find Christ in it and only when one finds Christ in the scriptures he can understand the father. The Gospel can never be offered only as an objective fact; the subjective element in it, in so far as the Holy Spirit works in the believer also must be taken into account. ⁶²

Today, meditation gets more importance. But it is not a right way because it very often stops with the inner spiritual joy; meditation in spirit should lead to the Christ and then through Christ to God. Bhakti should lead to Karma and Karma should lead to Gnana; neither the order should be changed nor the procedure be broken in the middle.

Although a Christian is obliged to hold to the unity of the Trinity, he shall not absolve their distinctions. The explanation for the Third Article of the Creed by Luther, excellently brings out the importance of Deus in Nobis :

I believe that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.....This is most certainly true.⁶³



iii) MAN IS IN RELATIONSHIP TO MAN OR MAN AS SERVANT (Karmayogi)

Bhakti alone cannot be the end of a spiritual man ; he must also be a Karmayogi. Bhakti that does not result in action (Karma) is like a body without life. Niles has rightly said that "the heart of Christianity is not concern for the soul but concern for the world." It is surprising to note that Niles makes this statement ; Niles usually inclines towards Bhakti pattern and life ; but he knows that a great danger exists in India so that one could separate his spiritual-bhakti life away from real involvement (Karmamarga) in the world of reality.

Man is not made only of spirit. If he were made only of spirit, he could have remained from beginning to end as a bhakta. But since he is body, his existence becomes complicated. If man's relationship is only with God, theology would be fairly simple. But man is related to man inseparably. Humanity is one ; man is Adam i.e. Adam stands for the human nature. To think that individual man or nations could exist without caring for others is to think in a materialistic sense, thus forgetting the spiritual aspect of man. Thus and therefore, not only the aspects of God's image in man, man's sinful nature, his salvation, and his redeemed life are important for a concept of man but the aspects of his cultural influences, his economic, political and ethical aspects are also equally important.

The Gospel belongs not only to the spiritual realm ; it has to be presented to men who are captives of their own Weltanschauungen. Humanity belongs to different traditions, different environments, different languages, cultures, customs and religions. Man is a very limited being ; confined to space and time. If man is taken as a unity, abstract spiritual truths about God must be conveyed to him in mundane sense perceptions. There is no spiritual eye and bodily

eye to see God and the world ; man has only one face, one body to realize both spiritual and material events. Thus both material and spiritual problems are inseparably interlinked with each other ; Jesus' way of treating man in both the realms is very clear ; the N.T. Greek word 'Sozei' is used both for bodily as well as spiritual healing (Mk. 5:34; 8:35).

Indigenisation is an important task that lies ahead in the theological road in India. One can talk of indigenisation in matters of external changes like using oil lamps in churches instead of candles, removing cheppels before one enters a church, sitting on floor in the church etc. But the intention of this thesis is not to enter this field. This lies in the field of adiaphora of indigenisation. On the other hand one could talk of indigenising the Scriptures i.e. to replace the Old Testament with Bhagavadgita or Quran or Vedanta. This also is not the intention of this study. Indigenisation lies neither in the external changes of Christianity nor in the changes of the content but in the practical field of understanding the meaning of the Gospel of Christ. If mission is the life of the church, then proclamation of the Gospel is the heart of this life. However, one could make the contents of the Gospel very complicated. Thus the question arises : what is the Gospel? It is very simple: it is contained in the deed of God for the salvation of man in and through Jesus Christ. The word of God which proclaims the love of God to man comes to man as a deed. Thus the Christian Gospel is not only a message but it is a living Word that makes man a new creation.

In this attempt of conveying the message of the Christian Scriptures one naturally comes across linguistic problems. He has to grapple with the existing terminology of a particular language in order to find out which local terminology comes closer to the Christian concepts of grace, salvation, church etc. Since this thesis deals with the concept of man, several anthropological terms have been used ; e. g. Yogi, Sarira, Jiva etc.

Indigenisation is primarily the right translation and communication of the Christian message. There had been, of course several stages in this process of communication. The missionaries have, at first, learned the local language in India and translated the Bible

and conveyed the Gospel of Christ. Then followed the Indian selective response to it through church life. The message became a way of life. The Indian Christians, having received the message, handed it on to the succeeding generations. The message was lived out in and through the church-life of the Christians. Today the task of theology in India is to reflect on the whole process of the method of finding terminology. This process of reflection has brought forth renewal and corrections also. This process does not test how clever a theologian is but how faithful he is to the Christian message; He would not be faithful, if he tolerates a change in the message; and he would not be faithful, if he tolerates that the message is not really and fully communicated.

Perceiving the increasing importance which terminology plays in the proclamation, a dissertation on this subject has been made by B. Tiliander.⁶⁴ In this thesis several Indian terms have been used to denote Christian concepts. For instance, the concept of man is brought forth in the term 'Yogi'. The word 'yoga' has several meanings in the Sankhya, Saiva-Siddhanta, Vedantic and Bhagavd-gita streams.⁶⁵ But in this thesis a new content is given to the term 'yogi' i.e. the Christian concept of man, especially as it is found in the Old Testament (Gen. 2:7). The root meaning of yoga is unity-a unity or control of thoughts and feelings.⁶⁶ Though the term 'yogi', had not been used in the Christian field,⁶⁷ Tiliander himself has preferred to use the term. He wrote:

*It would not be out of place to use the term yoga in Christian context.*⁶⁸

However, it must be pointed out that the first protestant missionary to India, Ziegenbalg, had already used the verbal form of 'yogi' and the verbal noun Yogippu to express meditation.⁶⁹ Today when the term 'mission' is being replaced, in some quarters, by 'dialogue' the importance and use of common or national religious terminology becomes very important.

The first and foremost problem of the Gospel arises when the Christian stands in relation to his non-Christians. In a country where the whole population belongs to Christianity, this problem

would be of little importance. But in a land where Christians live among other men who do not believe in Jesus Christ, the problem is of utmost importance. Thus all the Indian Christian theologians have endeavoured to make the Christian Gospel meaningful in the Indian context. Ofcourse, the question rises' whether every culture and every land should have different kinds of theologies. Should there be an Indian theology, German theology, American theology etc? But if the Kerygma of the early church is the source of the New Testament and if the New Testament is the source of Christian theology, then theology should become the servant of Kerygma. If it is true that the church lives by mission as fire exists by burning, then indigenisation is the 'key' to Mission.⁷¹

The purpose of indigenisation is certainly not to produce a different theology or change the Kerygma of the NT but, "grows out of the urge of Indian Christians to produce an authentic and relevant theology."⁷²

Specially when a country is in a transition period, old thoughts and ideas will have to be newly interpreted to suit the emerging prospects of the land. None could have thought of the idea of demythologizing in the Reformation time but it became a burning issue in the twentieth century when the Christian ideas have to be kept meaningful in a world advancing in science and technology. In India the traditional view on caste system and the concept of Karma undergo drastic changes because of the necessity to restructure India to function as one independent democratic nation. How far can the caste system be meaningful, when the constitution gives equal right to every citizen of India? Never in the history of India before independence such constitutional right of equality was in existence. All of a sudden in 1950 this equality became the law of the land.

The five-year plans try to break the age old concepts of accepting things as they come-the idea of Karma; thus Indian politicians are engaged in religious reformation whether they want it or not. An Indian Christian theologian also must rise up to new situations of India. Moritzen remarks:

Denn auch die Voelker Asiens sind im Aufbruch aus der traditions-bestimmten Kultur in eine neue Zeit, in der die Technik und damit Freiheit und Verantwortung der Menschen eine ausserordentliche Bedeutung gewonnen haben, und es zeigt sich, dass die nichtchristlichen Religionen die hier auftauchenden Fragen von ihrer traditionellen Gestalt her nicht wirklich beantworten können.⁷²

The next question that rises in this context is: What means indigenisation? Indigenisation does not mean either syncretism or eclecticism. In a land where syncretistic ideals rule, one has to be careful about syncretism. The primary aspect of indigenisation, of course, lies in the translation of the Christian Kerygma and the whole of the Christian scriptures from the Jewish and the Greek to the languages of India. Chenchiah had already realised the problem of translation.⁷³ K. Klostermeier thinks that the present work of Indian theologians is to find right Indian terms to express the Christian message.⁷⁴ One of the best articles on the role played by and the importance of language and culture in the task of preaching the Gospel comes from the hands of a missionary in Papua New Guinea, D.L. Whiteman.⁷⁵ A language is not made of mere words and translation is not successful with grammar books and dictionaries. Why did St. John use the word Logos in his Gospel? The Greek word Logos had a far different meaning than the Hebrew word Dhabar. He was not afraid of the differences in the concept of Logos; John boldly took the 'heathen' word with all its background meanings and simply used it in his Gospel. However, what the Greek 'Logos' had never done, the Christian 'Logos' had done i.e. it became flesh. In every language, some words have many meanings they are used in very many different contexts the more contexts in which the word is used, the richer it becomes; it is difficult to translate such words into another language e.g. the German word Bestimmung, the Tamil colloquial word Summa, the Sanskrit word Karma etc. Words like Bhakti, Karma, Maya and Jati bring a lot of pictures in the mind of a Tamilian. The Gospel has to be told in an Indian language; it has to be sung in Indian music. Many of the churches in South India still use translated hymns of the German Bavarian Hymn Book of last Century or the English-Anglican or Methodist or Baptist Hymn Books; they are also rich in meaning. But the difficulty is that western yhmns

are sung better in accompaniment with a piano or organ. How many churches in India can afford to have a piano or an organ? Specially in villages, one can hardly teach a hymn. The Indian system of music is different from the western music. They do not have notes to follow, -half notes, full note, slur, sharp, flat etc. It goes by Ragas and Thalās (melody and beats).

The Indian musical instruments like Jalra, Mathalam, Nathaswaram, Tabla. Harmonium, Flute, Veena etc. are quite fitting for such a music. Most of the Indian Christians come from middle or poor class; unless they are trained to read notes and possess piano, they will sing western hymns in their thought-patterns of Ragas and Thalās; and this is certainly not their fault.

Till the European government was in force in India, there was a general opinion that those who rule India must also have a better music; but now India is ruled by Hindus. New developments in western influence India; new churches do not get organs; proper training is lacking. Many of the Tamil churches now use hymn books which are no longer in vogue in Bavaria or England, their places of origin. An Anglican visiting India, does not feel at home with the Indian Anglican liturgy because the Anglican liturgy in England has gone through several revisions while the Indian liturgy remains original; the same case with the Lutheran hymn book also. Now Indians have to produce new songs and in this process they face difficulties. The composer of a song feels limited in the list of vocabulary, not because there are no words but he is afraid to use all words that belong to his language. e.g. one wonders whether he can use the word 'Avatr; the language, therefore, shrinks for a Christian post. A composer of songs desires to be free from the bondage and to choose words as his thoughts fly. Another big difficulty arises with the choice of the second person singular pronoun-to address God. Tamil language has 4 forms to address a person (or God) to whom he wants to speak. Ni is used by an elder person to a younger one (Father to Son); it is equal to the German du. Ningal is used by a younger to an elder person (son to father and wife to husband) (German 'Ihr'). Thangal is used to honour a person (Minister, King,) (German-Sie); and Nir is used by one to a person, probably a

stranger, to whom he does not know whether respect should be given or not; one hears this form seldom in Tamil land. Most unfortunately Tamil Christians address God in the last form (Nir). When one composes a song addressing God as Ni (du), then some people think that it is a form of syncretism because only Hindu Tamil song composers use this term Ni to address God.⁷⁶

The Tamil Bible has used the word 'maya' several times, specially in the book of the Preachers. The words 'Bhakti' and 'Gnanam' and 'Jati' (Devotion, Wisdom, Caste,) are used sometimes but the most of words like Karma and Dharma have not been used.⁷⁷

Writing theology for India does not mean that theology made in other lands should be necessarily avoided. Man's nature remains the same everywhere. Western theology also has never taken this attitude and avoided all eastern thoughts. In fact, western theology has kept much of Eastern-hebraic thoughts-e.g. man's nature, that he is one unity of body, spirit, soul and that he is basically a sinner.⁷⁸

It is very strange that while the Indian Christian theologians give so much importance to indigenisation, their Sitz im Leben shows much westernisation viz. in Housing patterns, medical treatment, urbanisation, industrialisation etc. Indian scientists bring more of western ideas from abroad than Indian theologians. Life and teaching shall not be separated; one is inseparably interlinked with the other. Body and soul of man cannot be handled one in an eastern and the other in a western way; man is Purusha. One can make use of befitting thoughts of other lands which suit the context but he has to transform the thoughts into the local language. When this is well done, it is already a long way in the process of indigenisation.

Man's relationship with his fellowmen comes out better in the concept of the priesthood of all believers than in a clergy-laity division. What is needed in India today is a basic theological knowledge spread over the whole land and not be confined to the clergy. In India, not only the Brahmins but many other castes also had their own priests; it is difficult to establish whether the Dravidians had caste system at all.⁷⁹

The democratic pattern of society itself is not that which grows out of the Indian soil but was adopted from outside in order to fit the social development. Neither is the concept Humanisation a real outgrowth from the Indian situation. Of course, these ideas can be utilized, provided there is proper ground for it; in order to appreciate the idea of humanisation, one should know the worth of a human being; with many beggars and poor people who cannot afford to have a meal a day, the term humanisation sounds artificial.

The following paragraph shows the importance of indigenisation as it is highlighted by Indian theologians.

Devanandan has an interesting remark. He says that it is not important to indigenise the Gospel; but what is important is to indigenise the people.⁸⁰ Is then Devanandan against indigenisation? Does he not understand the difficulties of Chenchiah and Chakkarai, who when they believed in Jesus Christ found that Christianity still remained foreign to the Indian thinking and therefore tried, in spite of their handicaps in the theological education, to interpret Christ in Indian terms? Even Niles had talked about the 'flower pot'. Devanandan's views reveal that the matter of indigenisation is more serious than what one thinks. He thinks that the Indian Christians, as persons and their groups, must be nationalised or indigenised. Usually there is no need for it because every person remains a citizen of his thought-world. Devanandan thought that Indian Christians were not really Indian and therefore they must be made to be involved in social life as real citizens of India. He accepts the criticism that Christians live in India as though they were foreigners.⁸¹ Thus he wants to say that it is easier to indigenise theology than a person; only people like St. Paul could become all for the sake of many—a Jew to a Jew, a Greek to a Greek, to those under the Law as one under the Law etc. (I Cor. 9:19f) he did this, of course, because of the love of Christ which constrained him to do so. Thus Devanandan's call for an active involvement of Christians in the social struggles of Indians is quite meaningful; the method he adopted to achieve his aim viz. Dialogue is thus, understandable.

It is surprising to note that M. M. Thomas recognises Barth, who as a western theologian has influenced him and not Bultmann. Actually Thomas' theological position is closer to Bultmann than Barth viz. in his emphasis on man's context or existential situation and his stress on anthropological aspects, and his perception of the impact of science and technology on religion. Bultmann could have helped him much more than others on these points. In his controversy with Pannenberg, Thomas affirms the importance of indigenisation and the necessity of Indian theologians to develop their own theology.⁸² Chenchiah puts it graphically: "Christianity comes to us as a seed and not as a tree."⁸³ Chandran thinks that Indian Christian anthropology should be different from other views.⁸⁴ After making a thorough study of the status of churches in Madras, their condition of growth and popularity etc. Nelson remarks, "when anthropological and sociological factors are taken into account, congregations multiply".⁸⁵ C.L. Furtado opines that Luther's reforms were meaningful because they questioned the irrelevant acts of the church and made it "indigenous". Quoting Baago, he writes, "Indigenisation is evangelisation. It is the planting of the Gospel inside another culture, another philosophy and another religion."⁸⁶ The importance and the necessity of the Gospel becoming relevant to those who are addressed is well brought out by Moritzen in the following words:

Nun ist aber der Protestantismus überzeugt, dass das Evangelium nicht Gesetz oder Norm, sondern Hilfe, Angebot, Aufruf ist, eine Botschaft, die als Antwort eine freie Entscheidung des Hoerers fordert.....Sie muss vom Adressanten ihrer Botschaft her denken, von seinen Noten, Hoffnungen, Angsten und Freuden.⁸⁷

Culture, economics, politics and ethics, play an important role in a bhakta's relationship with men of his own and of other men of other cultures, politics etc. The word culture is very inclusive of the whole way of life of a group of people, a nation or a race. It shows that the structure of a society is built in course of time, in the process of which all elements like the natural resources of a land, its climate, conditions, its religious beliefs, social customs etc. etc. go to form its culture. Any change in one side of its

structure, either in secular, agricultural or religious life will automatically affect the whole. Therefore any social or religious reformer is required not only to pull down the unwanted or obsolete blocks in a social structure but to constructively build a new structure in its place. Bede Griffiths rightly remarks :

*Though the experience of God goes beyond all cultural limitations and reaches out to the infinite and eternal, yet it always remains culturally conditioned and can only be expressed in the language and thought-patterns of a particular people.*⁸⁸

He continues to say : "We cannot conceive of an Indian Christian spirituality which would not take into account of the economic and social conditions of India today".⁸⁹

One of the Indian Christian theologians who gives more attention to cultural impacts is J. R. Chandran. In his theological college, there had been attempts to incorporate the Indian-Hindu festivals like Pongal and Dipavali in the pattern of Christian worship and to give a new meaning in the light of Christian teachings. One can easily find his interest in culture from the way he argues for the adaptation of Pottu (a dot worn by women on their forehead).⁹⁰

Economic problems are the most discussed in India. A Christian theologian is certainly not an economist; but a religious or spiritual way of life which rejects or ignores the economic problem of India is not worth its calibre. A Christian theologian must necessarily grapple with the problem: What does the Gospel mean in a land where poverty rules?

Usually a question is raised in Christian circles: Can a Christian take active part in politics? Of course this question is meaningless in a democratic country like India. India is, at present, the biggest democratic country in the world, in terms of the number of its citizens. In a democratic country, if one does not want to go to the polls to decide the government of the land, it is a political sin. It is nothing to deny the freedom of a citizen to vote as he knows best and it is almost the same fault if the people would not decide their rulers. Democracy presupposes a fairly good political knowledge of every citizen of the country. Because India unfortunately does not possess this standard of political knowledge

throughout its land due to lack of literacy and information, Christianity can contribute a lot through its social works in the fields of education and giving information.

The question whether politics is more important than theology is a meaningless one ; both must co-operate with each other. In fact politics, controls everything today because it deals with the problem of today viz. defence of a land, oil resource problems, energy problems, housing, trade, peace, community development etc. etc. A Christian theologian also has to struggle with the problems of the unity of India, family planning, smuggling, nationalism, price rise, bonded labour, growing trees, evil roles played by middle men, language problem, beggar problem etc. etc. It should not be that the theologians fight a battle up in the air while politicians struggle with the everyday problem of man. But, it is better that Christians in India, before they jump into political reformations, involve themselves in the social uplift of the oppressed, as Rajagopalachari had suggested to Bp. Appasamy.⁹¹

The Christian picture of man will not be complete if it does not deal with his ethical problems. Man's relationship with God alone is not enough, it must find its exact reflection in man's relation with man. A Bhakta must also be a Karmayogi. Especially in a land of mystical religions, there is always the danger of underrating the value of ethical principles. The Gurukul Research group has pointed Appasamy's Bhakti theology from this perspective.⁹² Appasamy himself knows that Judaism and Christianity are ethical religions whereas the Hindu background is not ethical but meta-physical spirituality more than morality.⁹³ Therefore it is most important that Indian Christian theologians give much stress to ethics.

Raju is quite right in saying that Ethics in India is mainly intended for the individual and not for the society. India is a land of many races; the original inhabitants of India were always conquered by the invading nations-so were the aboriginals and then the Dravidians, then the Aryans, then the Muslims. After the Muslims, the English people conquered and annexed the whole of India to the British empire. So the ethics of the conquering people always

clashed with that of the inhabitants and there has been always a mixture of religions, languages and cultures. Since the conquering and conquered people always lived side by side without total separation, there arose different groups and castes. Thus ethics in India became more individualistic than social. Thus the people of India never felt a unity like other nations. Patriotism could not mean anything to them. India remained lands within land. Society never meant one but in pieces-Hindu-Muslim, Tamil-Telugu, Kshatria-Vaisya etc. Betrayal of one Indian by another was, therefore not uncommon during the Moghul and English invasions. Now India stands united as a democracy; though it is too big to be really united, the new situation demands a common ethical standard. The ethics of the Gita as noted below needs modifications.

Better is one's own law though imperfectly carried out than the law of another carried out perfectly. Better is death in (the fulfilment of) one's own law for to follow another's law is perilous. (Gita 3:35)⁹⁴

Ethics in India, thus, had always neglected the social aspect of it; bhakti had always remained personal; the Saints had hardly even bothered about bringing up the weaker ones; the Karma theory only established this division in society. One did not bother himself about a better society but wanted a better caste or family. The famous Tamil novelist Akilan has brought out this aspect clearly in his speech on 'The relationship between man and society' in Tamil literature. He says:

Our society does not care much about external discipline. This is witnessed by the great economic chasm. I think that our society which has created thousands of divisions within itself has no sense for external discipline. But it is very much concerned about the internal discipline seen in husband-wife relationship. Because of this, it stumbles by being unable to think beyond the frontiers of one's family, caste and religion.⁹⁵ Chandran, realising this dire need in the field of ethics, has written a book on this topic. His approach must necessarily find a place in the Christian concept of man in India,

iv) MAN IS IN RELATION WITH GOD AND MAN SIMULTANEOUSLY (GnanaYogi)

Introduction: Man can be a yogi even if he does not believe in God and does not believe in man: however, he knows that he is Sarira-Jiva-Purusha. But his life becomes meaningful only if he believes his relationship with God (Bhaktayogi) and on that basis, his relationship to man (karmayogi). This relationship to God and man cannot remain totally separated from one another; they also find their unity. It is not that a man can serve one day God and another day man; by serving God he, automatically and simultaneously, can serve man; what he thinks he offers to God can become a service to man and what he thinks he is doing for man can become an act towards God (Mt. 25). Therefore he must also be a Gnanayogi to know the hidden nature of these relationships.

One could lead a life as Bhaktayogi without being correctly related to man and one could be a Karmayogi without right relation to God. Pharisaism and some kind of pietism and Humanism and secularism point to such possibilities. But man shall serve God and man. Thus the concept of man fits together with doctrines of the Two Kingdoms and the Trinity. These two doctrines shall not be used as premises for constructing other conclusions but these two doctrines are hypothetical conclusions of other premises. These theological problems dealt with in this chapter are only selective and not exhaustive.

Doctrine of Two-Kingdoms

The doctrine of the Two Kingdoms is a conclusion taking into account the nature of man; that man is Sarira and jiva and that he stands in relation to God and man simultaneously, demand the necessity of the doctrine of the two kingdoms.

On this account our teachers have been compelled, for the sake of comforting consciences, to point out the difference between spiritual and temporal power, sword and authority, and they have taught that because of God's command both authorities and powers are to be honoured and esteemed with all reverence as the two highest gifts of God on earth.⁹⁶

Man lives in two worlds. The temporal world protects his 'body' while the spiritual world takes care of his 'soul'. The government takes care of the secular order and the Gospel takes care of the spiritual order.⁹⁷ Man is not just secular or spiritual; he is both. Thus he lives in two worlds.

Augsburg Confession says that the Bishops (i.e. church, including Pastors have power to forgive sins or to retain them; but they are not to wield authority over the creation of a kingdom or prince or lead wars. The reason why the doctrine of the two kingdoms became important was the then situation. Luther found that the church had taken over governmental responsibilities, instead of being content with spiritual powers and got involved in conflicts 'serious wars, tumults and uprisings'.⁹⁸ The church is not triumphant in the secular sense of the term but militant in the spiritual sense.

The church shall be the church and not a political government. The Christian was advised to follow the secular authorities in their fields. The church strictly speaking does not live in two worlds but the Christian does. Therefore a Christian can protest anytime, not only against wrong spiritual powers but against wrong secular powers too; for the Christian lives in two worlds simultaneously by his own nature. According to St. Paul the Christian has two citizenships (Phil. 3:20; Acts 25:10).

Further in the reformation time, people were divided in to the ruled and the ruling classes. Today this division does not depend upon families (Monarchy) or certain nobles (Aristocracy). People elect their own rulers. The church does not therefore fight against the state as it was the case in the 16th century. Therefore now it is difficult to understand the doctrine of the two kingdoms.

However, one knows clearly, that today the power of the church seems nothing to be compared to the power of the state.

Today the state is engaged with the everyday problem of man-taxes, control of prices, energy problems, foreign policies etc. The church has lost its every day contact with many people. For some it remains a once-a-week or once-a-year programme.

That man lives in two worlds is not more correct than to say that two worlds live in man-the material and the spiritual, weakness and willingness, therefore Law and Gospel. Man is the cause of this separations, and the field of this encounter.

Sometimes he needs Law, sometimes he wants Love. Law excludes the Gospel while Gospel presupposes Law i.e. the Gospel stands on a higher realm than the Law. Therefore one who accepts the Gospel cannot ignore basic laws. Jesus Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil the Law. The reinterpretation of the commandments (Mt.5:6) in no way, annuls the previous discipline but extends its dimensions to deeper levels.

Man can never be happy unless he has attained the Gospel level; the need for the Gospel is already in his blood. The removal of Law cannot bring satisfaction to man but only its fulfilment. It is not the youth of man but the death of man that decides the story of man. (The Preacher 7:1,8) Man lives in two worlds. Thus one can understand all theologies of paradox (Kierkegaard) and dialectical theology (Barth). The dialectic stems out of his essence. Emil Brunner brings out this dialectical nature to its extreme point of 'contradiction' in his phrase 'Der Mensch im Widerspruch'. This is, exactly, man's nature; to forget one or the other aspect or to confuse one's realm with the other will only bring out an unclear picture of man.

Man is in need of both the first and the second uses of the Law. He remains earthly and spiritual. "You are not in the flesh" (Rom. 8:9) does not mean that the organs of our body have lost their functions but that we are not ruled by our passions; that we are no longer ruled by our passions does not mean that we no longer possess the passion or that we can no longer fall into the old passions. Man is Adam. It is not that he is born as an old Adam and in

baptism suddenly becomes New Adam but the old and the new Adam always exists "in, under and with" this man. Man's freedom and responsibility for every act of his life can never be minimised. But this freedom has power only in the realm of this world. Man is always dependent on God, to receive His Grace, guidance and above all be in His relationship.

Today man is increasingly interested in making things easy. He has developed his technological know-how to that extent that one could expect the computers to replace the teachers.⁹⁹ Man wants to bring the state and the church also together. This attempt is found already in the 19th Century in those who wanted to have the kingdom of God on earth.¹⁰⁰ This trend is just carried on by secularisation and humanisation movements. In the Middle Ages, the church was interested in the spiritual aspect of man and the state was expected to care for his body. But an attempt to bring the two together, as in the case of Zwingli, was disastrous.

The Augsburg Confession is very clear ; there is a secular sphere and a spiritual sphere so far as powers are concerned. The church belongs to the latter realm. Therefore, it shall not give rules as to how the city council is to be run or to declare war against the heathen or to instruct how soldiers shall be trained. But it shall use its powers of preaching the Gospel, administering sacraments and forgiving or retaining sins etc.

Today the church is losing its power because the civil government is taking over more and more, some of its functions. From beginning, it is the same case. In the O.T. the priests regulated law and order in society (commandments), and economic problems (height of a parapet wall, regarding interest, helping the poor etc.) and labour laws (one day of the week to be a holiday). Slowly the spiritual aspect of man got recognized in the social realm and today the secular governments carry out these functions. During the reformation time, the two powers-secular and sacred, came to its sharp contrast because at that time they reached their high and equal powers and influence on man.

Today man has grown to that extent that the so-called spiritual functions had been almost totally taken over by the secular

authorities, e.g. social justice, helping widows, and the aged etc. Today socialistic countries build homes for the aged and give support for the poor. In India the socially and economically depressed groups get constitutional advantages over the so-called higher groups. What Paul did by collecting money from richer congregations in order to the poorer congregations is done today by the state and secular organisations like Brot fuer die Welt, Blindenmission and state projects like the Bonn project; World Bank, U.N.O., Amnesty International are some other such associations. Therefore, it is natural that many people, especially youngsters, think that there is no meaning for the existence of the church. But the church will and can never lose its function so far as man remains a sinner. Augsburg confession has rightly brought out the fact that the church's function lies not in the realm of outward existence of man, but in the 'inward and eternal model of existence and righteousness of the heart' (XVI). The church has not lost its meaning for forgiveness (the secular law has nothing to say on it) and to proclaim the Gospel and administer sacraments for the well being of man.

The great danger of today is that man comes into the fold of the outward (secular) world more and sees the diminishing status of the ecclesiastical powers. Thus man is in danger of forgetting one world in which he lives viz. the spiritual world. The real danger is that the secular world can never replace the spirirual world. Though the state can pass many laws regarding social welfare of all people, distribution of wealth through tax system etc., one witness that man is capable of breaking any law; when the law system becomes more complicated, the ingenuity of man rises above it; after all, it is man who makes these laws. The judiciary only proves it: for people who have committed great crimes and evaded taxes, there are highly intelligent people who plead on their behalf so that they, not seldom, may be redeemed from their punishments. Through law and punishment system, man can never move to a higher, nobler realm. Since man is not just Sarira, but Jiva also, his jiva also should be appealed to. Man needs to know that matter is not the beginning and the end but that the spirit also matters.

With this system of law and punishment, it is natural that man does not like to go to the church because there he will get a bad conscience. This proves that man has still his inward conscience ; he has not totally lost it though he wants to set it in lull. God's Rule will never lose its meaning so far as man is a sinner. Man can never make a total secular world out of God's world. The way out seems to be either to involve in politics or to strengthen the church against the state. It is better that man recognises two worlds instead of one.¹⁰¹

In one way the modern secularistic movement can be traced back to Luther's theology. By and through his contribution towards the Doctrine of the two kingdoms he brought forth a clear relationship between the secular and the sacred. Of course, in the Middle Ages, one distinguished between the sacred and the secular ; but the sacred was always estimated as higher realm than the secular ; the secular needed to be ordained in its place by the sacred. It was Luther who gave equal status to both the sacred and the secular and proclaimed that one shall not dominate over the other. According to him, they are both necessary for man and both rules are ordained by God. Therefore both must be obeyed by man. Man lives in two kingdoms and it is in the relationship between God and man that the idea of the two kingdoms find their validity and legitimacy. There is only one God and His rule is a rule of love. But man has given occasion to the rise of a negative rule; he has fallen from his destiny; he has become inverted into his own selfish ideas and works. And he is strong in his position because he has the freedom to choose evil. Of course no man chooses always the good or only the bad; man does not consider such a state as freedom. But, in fact, freedom means authority to choose always good. Man cannot dupe himself choosing good at one time and doing the contrary at another time. It is a bogus freedom- a freedom without freedom. If every man realizes that he is a sinner at one time or other in his life then how far is he really free? Is there no man in this world who wants to be perfect? If man wants to be perfect and cannot be perfect, how far has he the power to choose? To be perfect for one day or one year or one stage of life (Brahmacharya, Grahastha, Vanaprastha or Sannyasa) and not to bother about the rest of his life means that he has freedom for events but not freedom

for life. The free will of man is operative and is able to decide particular events and not a definite way of life. This kind of freedom is more to be connected with particular events rather than with man himself.

This freedom to choose particular events also depends not on his own free will; for, what is he? After all, man is a product of heredity and environment. To a large extent his physical and mental nature is decided by his neighbours and his ancestors. Sometimes handicapped children are born. What does the child do for it? What is its responsibility to be so born? For no fault of its own, it has to suffer. It has to decide or choose in one particular way, probably which looks wrong in the eyes of the normal beings; but the child does it not because of its decision but because of its nature, for which it has no responsibility. Who is responsible for such a handicapped child?

The blame cannot be thrown only on its parents, as some do; of course, it is also possible. By wrong use of native medicines (since millions of people do not know family planning methods), drinks and drugs, one could be the cause of such bad luck. But responsibility can be equally thrown to another side also i.e. on the society. For no fault of the individual using wrong medicines or so, one could give birth to a handicapped child and i.e. the case in the areas of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But there may be cases which do not belong to either of the above categories. Then what? Why is that child so born? Human knowledge fails here; it stands with a question mark on its forehead. It leads to more research. Perhaps an answer will be found. But there will always be problems for man for which he has not and cannot have a solution. He is a being with very limited resources, although he may not be willing to accept it. It is possible to find a third reason as found in the healing of the born blind man (Joh.9). It comes in God's plan for this world. To the question: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned or his parents but that the works of God might be made manifest in him." (Joh. 9:2,3)

Sometimes it may also be true that some who have used medicines or drugs wrongly, get normal child; such wonders also can

happen. To delineate the ill-fate of a man only to his earlier works (Karma) expresses a disbelief in the freedom of God and in the responsibility of the society.

Man lives in two worlds, according to one he serves the law and according to the other he serves the Gospel. Paul's cry: 'O! wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death?' (Rom.7) is a typical cry of every good Christian who longs to put an end to this dilemma of man. The struggle of Paul is a common characteristic of all human beings; man's spirit desires against his flesh and his flesh craves against his spirit. The moment one does not realize this struggle in himself, he becomes either God or devil; for he ceases to be man. Man is essentially a unity i.e. body—spirit—soul. He lives in two worlds; he necessitates the enforcement of Law, for without the Law he does not know the limits of his freedom. The Law protects namely his neighbours' interests. A Bhakta who loves God and therefore his neighbours, cannot but be interested in his neighbour's well being.

There are two kinds of laws—state laws which protect the neighbours interests and thus makes it possible that man can live together with other human beings in or as a society; without such laws a society or community is unthinkable. But many violate these laws through force, money and other influences. Therefore man needs another law which will point out the double sin he has committed. This is law of love which reminds him that he is not only in relationship to man but to God also. If man is to be a real human being, he direly needs this second type of law. Some men may be blameless according to the state law but who can hold himself to be blameless in the light of the second one?

Man lives in two worlds because of his nature; his nature is always to cross the boundaries of his freedom-limit. He wants to move, move upwards. In this good progress, sometimes he infringes on the property of his neighbour. The world is a witness to the greatest progress achieved in the history of the world in and through the cross of Christ. For any progress there is no other way. Love is the only weapon of progress. Law does not make any promotion; it only tries to safeguard the *status quo*.

What Luther has done can be compared to a division of labour in the theological field. He found that the church leaders shall not burden themselves with the administration of state laws too. Gospel and Law do not go hand in hand; they belong to two realms. Therefore, the state shall not compel a man to be a Christian, nor abolish divine worship. One question still remains: How can a man give one answer as a citizen and another as a Christian? This is not abnormal. A man takes, normally, different decisions in different roles viz. as a father, teacher, citizen etc. A father may give what his son desires (toy, book, sweets); but the same man may not acquit his son as a judge. The father may do what he does not like but still he has to do. So a man as a state chief is concerned about the establishment of state laws so that society is protected. These laws are basic and minimum for human existence as society. But in the church, he no longer bothers about basic laws, which are demanded from every citizen of the country, but a higher law, a law which is based on love. Probably not everyone could follow this law but as a Christian one can follow it himself and convince others to follow the same. As long as there are Christians and non-Christians and also weak Christians, one has to accept these two orders, two laws and two kingdoms. So long as man is in flesh i.e. not only a Christian but every man in this world, till then the necessity for daily repentance will never cease. One might have conquered his flesh and live in the spirit; but the very fact that he still lives in this human world as a human being in flesh and blood, makes daily repentance immensely important. Many Christian gurus teach that once a man has taken adult baptism he has no possibility to sin there after (and therefore no possibility for repentance also). But some Christian 'gurus' after having been filled with the spirit and having done wonders and having lived a holy life, have fallen into sins from which they could never come out.¹⁰² Brother Lawry and Jim Jones are not the only examples who had good beginnings and bad ends; overenthusiasm, in the spiritual realm is, thus, risky, dangerous and sometimes disastrous. Luther's idea of daily repentance has more to do with progress than with retrogression.

The Augsburg Confession also warns the Christians against false beliefs of the doctrine of the two kingdoms. It says:

"Accordingly Christians are obliged to be subject to civil authority and obey its commands and laws in all that can be done without sin. But when commands of the civil authority cannot be obeyed without sin-we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29)."¹⁰³ If Chandran had taken this verdict of the Augsburg Confession seriously, he would not have come to the misjudgement of the Lutheran attitude to the doctrine of the two kingdoms.¹⁰⁴

When St. Paul says that he is the 'foremost' of all sinners, it is not according to the Law. According to Law, he says, he is blameless like the rich young man. (I Tim 1:15; Phil. 3:6; Matth. 19:20). So one understands that he is talking here of the law of love. One must be very careful to know in which sense he uses the term sin. There are two ways of recognising a transgression of law recognising it *coram Deo* and recognising it *coram homini*. A non-Christian's view of sin is very different from a Christian view of sin, although they may commit the same act; one looks at it thousand times enlarged than the other. The sinfulness of sin is revealed only to those who know the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is only when man stands before the cross of Jesus Christ, that he knows sinfulness of his sins.

Regarding the doctrine of the two kingdoms, Jesus expressed his view in the context of paying tax to Caesar (Mk. 12:13-17). Jesus did not give a simple answer to those who asked him whether it is lawful to pay tax to Caesar. Jesus looked at the intention of their question. The question was shrouded with malignity. It was not a question which sought an answer; it was a question to lead the one who answers into a trap. It was similar to the serpent's question to Eve. But Jesus found out that the question had a theological flaw; the question is wrong, because it supposes the equality of Caesar with God. Having asked for a coin, He told them to pay to the Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. He pointed out the mistake of the question; Caesar or God and showed them the answer: Caesar and God. They are two realms, two worlds.

Among the Indian Christian theologians, apart from Chandran, Devanandan also talks about two kingdoms.¹⁰⁵ Thomas' view of

society and religion also comes close to the doctrine of the two kingdoms.¹⁰⁶

The Power of Man's Will

In his relationship with God and man, man should realize the power of his will. The concept of the bondage of the will or the freedom of the will cannot be understood by an ordinary man; only the man who had understood his relationship to God (Bhakti) and his relationship to man (Karma) with all his failures, weaknesses, joys and strength shall begin to probe into this problem of will. Man realises the power of his will as a Karma Yogi and the powerlessness of his will as a Bhakta yogi.¹⁰⁷

There are different kinds of freedom. Very often one confuses freedom of will in the religious realm with freedom of will in the non-religious realm. One can talk of freedom in political, economic, social fields. India has obtained its political freedom recently. India is suffering from economic freedom; inspite of all its endeavours, it finds that it is caught in the quagmire of economic bondage. The social bondage seems to be still worse; caste system is so strong that it is impossible for one to free himself from the fetters of caste discipline. In the field of philosophy one can arrive at deterministric tendencies. In the psychological field also, persons like Freud and Fromm had arrived at man's "unfree" nature.¹⁰⁸ Heredity and environment also show how man is shaped by them against his own powers. Thus, surprisingly enough, scientists who belong to the non-theological fields, stress the inability of man and the powerlessness of his will.

The book on the Bondage of the Will by Luther gives a clear picture of the right theological stand on the subject. It does not deny the freedom of man in the political, economic and social realms. Man can choose anything of his own i.e. to choose a shirt, a fruit, a bride etc. But man has no power to choose his salvation. His will stands in bondage before the powerful love of God. Man lives in two realms; in the one, he has all the freedom to do what he likes and reap its consequences and in the other Realm, he is totally dependent.

Ofcourse, this view looks funny in this world where man reaches success after success. Why then, should one proclaim the bondage of man's will? If man is free in the world, let his freedom be rightly used. Then he will get his reward - good or bad. What is the use of saying to man that he is powerless, that he is a slave? Is he not a king? Does he not achieve progress after progress? Is the history of the world not improving? Do not men understand men better? Why should, then, one point out his bondage? Does God like to kill man by inducing an inferiority complex in him? Does He take pride in that? Not at all.

If man thinks that he is free to do as he likes, he will be the highest power; he will be like the gods! But what will happen to the ideological differences that exists among men? If man's will is capable of attaining salvation, then it should be clear which confession or ideology give the right view, probably the extreme rightists or the extreme leftists! If both are convinced that their own view is right, then man will try to use force to establish his views; he will not consider the views of other men. It will reflect itself on the worldly way of living. Suppose capitalism is convinced that its views are right, it will try to annihilate Communism and the end will be a world of capitalism which is equal to communism i.e. it would have used communistic principles of violence as a means for perfection and the net result will be that all human beings will get no other choice except to be capitalists i.e. man will lose his freedom. Therefore man, so long as he lives in this world, must live in freedom to inferior matters and in bondage to superior love. If man must live as man with his neighbour, inspite of his differences, then he has the only choice to find the unity of humanity in the Name of God, a God who is love a God, Who can convert the hearts of men to love, as seen in the crucified Christ. If man is totally free, he is no longer man, he is god. The final question is whether man should live inspite of differences or without differences; it is a question of living together, fellowship. If a husband and wife can live inspite of differences - otherwise it would be dull-then it is not the differences that matter but love for one another; till man is possessed of this love, he will be in bondage to it.

In many ways, man is a free agent, He can do almost everything, even in the spiritual realm. He can pray, keep the commandments, fast, praise God, totally surrender his life to God in perfect devotion and service to Him ; he can remain unmarried for the sake of the kingdom of God ; he can give all that he has to the poor, fight for the cause of the poor and die in that struggle. He can, thus, lead a moral and spiritual life. In spite of all these, God need not accept him or take him into His fellowship, Of course, one would ask : Is He then a loving God ? God Who accepts sinners, will He reject a genuine seeker of God ? God will not do it and cannot do it for He is love. Yes, this is true. God will not reject him but love him all the more. But can God be compelled ? Who can fix the standard of life which will compel God to accept him ? In that case, God has no freedom. Can man push God to a give-and-take situation where God loses His freedom ? The freedom of man jeopardises the freedom of God ! If man must have absolute freedom of will, then the consequence is, that God must lose His free will. In that case, what is the use of worshipping a God, who has no absolute freedom of will of His own ? If it is so, then man is to be placed far above God in power and will : man will then be god and God will then be man ! one need not write a theology of it ; the atheist will be far better than such a believer because at least he leaves God unconsidered and exalts the position of man ; at least he does not attempt to deprive God of His free will.

The best example, in this respect, can be seen in the relation between a bride and a bridegroom. A bridegroom may be very rich, very strong, educated, intelligent, gracious etc. But still a bride may reject him and choose to be alone. On the other hand, a bride may be very beautiful, clever, rich, shrewd and shy ; but still a bridegroom may reject her. Of course, this example does not quite fit in with the matter dealt with ; God is not like a bridegroom who has to choose only one bride. God loves every human being because He is the Father of all. But in that case, what can a son do to make one his father ? What ever good he does is only in response to being the son of the father and nothing else ; he can't do some works and then on that basis claim sonship.

If salvation means fellowship with God i.e. to be united with God or to accept God as Father, then it is a relationship. For every relationship, there must be atleast two persons. What "the Bondage of the will" denies is not salvation through faith but salvation through works. Though faith is also a gift of God to man, it is not God Who believes in Himself but man believes in God. Thus it nullifies any attempt of man to claim salvation and makes salvation a sheer gift of God. Man does not do anything for his salvation; in fact, he cannot do anything for it. This is the meaning of the bondage of the will of man. Since God is creator and man is creature, man's will is totally unable to make God do something for him. This is the meaning of *sola gratia*. Salvation is the beginning of a relationship between God and man; God receives man into His relationship, not because of what he has done-as an equal-but because he has realised what he is - that he is a creature dependent on God. This is the meaning of the sovereignty of God. It is this kind of utter trust and implicit obedience to God that makes a believer, a bhakta, and makes his life on earth acceptable to God. No one can ever give anything to God; it is wrong Bhakti if one thinks so. Of course, God receives the praise of man; but praise to god can only be a word of thanks for a substantial good that is received from God. Confession can only be based on the sins man has committed, and on a deep desire for forgiveness. A Bhakta thinks that he can give to God through offerings. But God does not accept Rupees or Marks, not even Dollars; this world's currency cannot be cashed in God's Kingdom. What God wants from man is neither his money nor his might but Micah has aptly put what God wants from man, namely justice and kindness towards man and humility towards God (Mic. 6:6-8). "The freedom of a Christian man" can be brought in all its strength in the Bhakta's relationship with man (Karmayogi): but *coram Deo* man can only realise the bondage of his will (Gnana-yogi); in the confession of his sins, in intercessory prayer for others, in singing praise to God, in hearing God's Word and in the participation in the Lord's Supper, man can only realise his weakness, his inability; this is the meaning of the bondage of the will.

A reflection on the freedom of the will can be found in Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethesemane : "My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Mt.26:49). This is the prayer of prayers and the ground of all prayers. Chakkarai has made this prayer of Jesus as one of the main pillars of his indigenous theology.¹⁰⁹ Although no one can compel God to give him salvation, God will never reject any Bhakta who does a lot of work with a real desire to be saved ; rather, God is in search of sinners and He wants to accept them for God is love. Thus, if God accepts the man of work, it is not because of his work but because of what God is i.e. love. This is clearly seen in the parable of the prodigal son. The son knew that it is not because of his return that he merits acceptance but because of his father's love ; he pledged only to be taken as a servant but received the honour of sonship. If man can compel God to save him, God will become subordinate to man ; God forbid it.

A Christian will set his will in conformity to God's will as Jesus has done. It is true that God has bound Himself in His promise to accept the sinner. He is not free to do the opposite. Actually God has no freedom to do wrong or evil. But this is the real freedom. Freedom is not the ability to choose good or evil ; it is the non-ability to choose evil. Freedom is to be good, to be like Jesus Christ. If man can do that and not always waver between good and evil, then he is also free¹¹⁰.

Today one can say : the concept of the bondage of the will might have been understood in the 16th century ; but is it meaningful in this present century, when man is realising his exalted nature, to humiliate man with the concept of his bondage ? Is it not pessimistic, crushing man to desperation ? Does it not make man think that because nothing lies in him to be saved, he can become irresponsible in his acts ? The answer is to be found in the other way round. It is not pessimism but highest optimism ; it does not crush man but heals man's wounded nature. A right kind of belief in such a God leads one to a full responsible act in this world, rather than providing him with licentiousness. The proof of this can be seen in saints like Paul, Augustine, Luther etc.

The main argument is that there must be a positive balance. Today man thinks only of his ability and not his inability, his freedom and not his bondage. Three figures, in the history of the church, have elevated human freedom to its highest spheres, in their respective ages. They are Jesus Christ, Paul and Luther. Not only among Christians, but even among non-Christians, the three are praised for making man free. They all fought against the religious fetters of their respective ages (Pharisaism, Circumcision, Church Laws) and brought men out of their 'Egypt's'. But very curiously, it was these persons who had spoken about the bondage of man too. The same Jesus who said, "Nothing will be impossible to you" in the context of moving mountains (Mt. 17:20) also said, "with men it is impossible, but not with God" in the context of salvation (Mk. 10:27). Paul, who emphasized his freedom ("For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Gal. 5:1), also said, "wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:24). So also, Luther, who wrote "The freedom of a Christian man" (A. D. 1520) also wrote "The Bondage of the will" (A. D. 1525). This dialectic shall not be lost, This positive balance shall be maintained; otherwise man will slip into unrealistic state. It may be noted here that in the Indian religious thought, specially at the background of theory of Karma, the view of bondage is just the opposite of what one finds in the "De Servo Arbitrio". Man thinks that he is bound in the social, secular realm e. g. one cannot change his caste or divert his fate; but in the spiritual realm one can receive forgiveness by doing certain deeds. Stories about monks compelling Gods to bestow the blessings they want specially through *tapas* are not wanting in Indian religious literature.

Individual and Corporate elements in the concept of man

The Indian theologians are divided in their opinion of emphasising individual or corporate aspects in man. While Appasamy and D. T. Niles emphasise the personal aspect of man, Devanandan and M. M. Thomas stress the corporate aspect.

Man is Adam. There cannot be individual concepts for every man. Man means humanity. St. Paul brings this corporate idea beautifully through his picture of Soma. The church is Christ's Body. It is interesting to note that the West and the East are diametrically opposed in their understanding of the individual and corporate aspects in man. The East esteems man as an individual for purposes of religion and considers his corporate nature for purposes of society; this is exactly the other way round in the West. Religious worship, in India, is a matter of individual freedom. It can be explained in many ways. A divine service, once a week or so, is not a common feature. Each one goes to his temple when he likes and worships as long as he likes. There is no rule or understanding about the income and expenses of a temple. People come as they are attracted to a temple and pay what they like. When people sing the glory of God, one misses the choir, i.e. singing together as 'canon' or unison. Religious songs are generally individualistic; Bhajans are exceptions and do not form the basis of religious singing in India. In fact, there is no concept of the church; the concept that comes closest to the corporate idea of the church in India is the caste system. Unity of the nation is found more in the secular realm than in the religious realm. Naturally, therefore, the most influential elements of Hinduism are found in Yoga and meditation. For divine worship, every home is allowed to have its own *puja* room. But in the secular realm caste is a social binding; one dares not take his own view in caste matters. The family lives more as a corporate family; each member of the family does not get his own room to develop his own interest. All the members of the family share joys and sorrows of the family together. There is not incentive for the one who works hard because his additional earnings does not become his property. Even in a matter as marriage, it is not the bride or bridegroom alone who chooses the other partner, but the family and society at large play an important role in the selection of the bride and the bridegroom. Marriage in India does not mean an affair between two persons; rather the whole society is involved in it. While the west divides the time of man for purposes of corporate and individual purposes, in India, man's private time is infringed by his corporate commitments.

The world has shrunk very much; never in the history of the world, a family depended on society so much or a village on state, a state on the nation etc. as today. Man lived in small circles of families and then built small societies and then nations; but today he is building a universe; a cosmic construction is on the way. A doctor depends on the surgeon, the surgeon on the anaesthetist, the anaesthetist on electric power, which in turn depends on the co-operation of many people.

In the stone age, the uniting principle was family or clan; then it became a religious principle - God. Religion ruled till modern period. Now science has dismantled its authority. Today, the state with a constitution has become the uniting principle. The outward morality exists but the inward morality does not find its place in the state-structure. One can live by state laws in peace; but one can also commit sin through or because of the possibility of interpretation of the law. The state law has no spirit behind it as in the case of religion. One could pervert even a religious law and commit sin (Pharisaism). Religious law had one principle or spirit behind it i.e. love. But state law does not advocate or uphold this law of love. Thus, since modern period the principle of unity has disintegrated. Man, today, has no principle of unity to hold him together; man finds that he is the same everywhere, among all nations, all races, all lands. However, racial discrimination persists in many places and caste distinctions have not totally vanished; class distinctions have a strong hold over social activities. In spite of all these, man has come to know that intrinsically he will be no different if he were to be in the place of the other, who happens to be on the other side of his *Weltanschauung*.

Man is in search of a unifying principle. Many find it in ideologies - communism, capitalism, socialism or even terrorism. Unfortunately one looks at the other as his enemy and the cold war is always brewing because open war would and could only mean a predictable annihilation of humanity.

Man still seems to be bound inside the cage of national and cultural ideas. But many have already found out that the cage is only man-made and not a divine order or unbreakable wall. So they have

broken the rails of the cages of caste and colour, nation and society and have come out into the open. They have no cage now; that means no protection also. But they enjoy the freedom to know that man can live even without a cage. It is said that in the stone age might was right; this is the same case even now; it has only shifted from physical to intellectual or technological might.

In this conflagration and confusion, man almost loses sight of his human element and slips into the daily routine of mechanical observances and duties. Sometimes, he stops to think of the meaning of his life; but all that he could experience is bewilderment. He has no time to continue to think on these lines because the machine belt of daily routine is moving and he has to do his duty. Just as religion had taken care of secular laws in the times of old, so today the state has to consider man's spiritual needs. If it does not, then man will no longer be man; he will lose his freedom and become a mechanical being. But one can be happy to know that the Hand of God is behind the human history.

If it is true that God became man in Jesus Christ and He became "sin" in order to save "many", then ideological or personal circles to establish perfection or justice or love cannot be legitimate as against excluding other circles who seem to be uninterested or disinterested in such goals. If the kingdom of God is like a net with all kinds of fishes - bad and good - Mt. 13:47-50), then the church is certainly not more exclusive but inclusive than that.

The most difficult problem for a Gnana yogi is the problem of suffering. Christian theology does not give a cut and dried answer for the problem of the cause of sufferings. Indian theologians try to seek an answer in many fields such as political imbalances, moral flaws, sin against God's commandments etc. In India, at the background of the Karma theory, suffering is the result of a man's deed; the answer lies in the past. Buddha also found out a similar answer in the past: that desire is the cause of suffering. But two other aspects are indispensable in dealing with this problem: namely, the corporate aspect of man and the futuristic element in it. Both Hinduism and Buddhism have neglected the corporate aspect of man. Suffering, is not due only to a man's deeds: one's deeds-good

or bad-affect his neighbour equally; e.g. the family suffers when the head of the family is a drunkard. Thus one's action releases not only his own future Karma but the future Karma of those whom he brings into involvement in his action. The positive aspect of suffering (vicarious) for the sake of others must, at all costs, be made known in India. Further, Jesus Christ Himself found the answer for the suffering of the blind man, not in his deeds nor in his parents' but in the futuric aspect; suffering can be a good training ground in the world of faith (Joh. 9:1-2); sufferings can reveal the glory of God.

Trinity

The doctrine of the Trinity is the corner stone of Christian theology. Though this doctrine is not a stumbling block to the Hindus, to the millions of Muslims in India, it is understandable. The history of Indian interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity has taken several turns. Theologians have attempted to interpret it in different ways. Some found the Trimurthi concept of Brahma-Vishnu-Siva as the Hindu counterpart of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity; others had interpreted Trinity from the philosophical background of Sat-cit-ananda. The most recent interpretation of the Trinity comes from Raimondo Panikkar, who makes use of the three ways of salvation viz. Bhakti, Karma and Gnana to interpret the doctrine of the Trinity.¹¹¹ Usually, Christian theologians arrive at the doctrine of the Trinity because of Christology. On the other hand, one could approach the doctrine of the Trinity from an anthropological point also. That man is a unity presupposes that man is a unity of different parts; diversity is taken for granted where unity is spoken of. Man is sarira-jiva/purusha; only he who considers the unity of these aspects can be a yogi; he who does not find man as a unity but considers body as against soul does not understand man correctly. The macrocosmic pattern of the Trinity is already present in the microcosmic concept of man. If man can understand his unity, he will not find it difficult to accept the doctrine of the Trinity. However, it is not analogia entis; God is primarily spirit.¹¹²

Anthropologically if one can talk of sarira and jiva, as representing two extremes, so one can talk of God as Deus Revelatus and Deus

Absconditus. Actually, Gerrish distinguishes two kinds of hiddenness of God in Luther. He affirms that Luther had contributed to the doctrine of the hiddenness of God both in His revelation, and outside His revelation, though the second aspect is difficult to be understood "because it implies a knowledge of God outside of Christ."¹¹³ Though Barth has given little importance to the concept of Deus Absconditus in his concept of Trinity, Luther has dealt with it elaborately in his book "De Servo Arbitrio". Though God says He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, it comes to pass. How does God allow this to happen? Luther found the answer in the hidden God. But in Jesus Christ, God has shown the way to man. Therefore, to talk of God only in the sense of 'neti neti' is a denial of the double aspect of God as Absconditus and Revelatus.

Psychology talks of man as emotion -intellect -will; none finds this difficult to understand. The doctrine of the Trinity can be understood better from anthropological angle. God is One and only One but man can understand His fullness only in three aspects. The mystery of the Trinity is in understanding the relationship between God and man. The concept of the Trinity is born where man meets God. Man is essentially a social being; he must be in relation not only with God but also with his neighbour; only then his personality will be balanced. Man can find his 'self' only in this two-way relationship. If man has relation only with man, he cannot have any spiritual progress in the path of love because man, is essentially prone to sin. Vivekananda's dictum; it is sin to call man a sinner¹¹⁴ is against the proverb: To err is human. It is interesting to note that W. Philipp and Th. Haecker talk of man as 'triune' or 'ternare'. According to them, the doctrine of the Trinity is to be understood from anthropological point of view.¹¹⁵



v) MAN IN LOVE or MAN COME OF AGE (Anban)

Man can be a yogi and know himself; he could be a Bhakti-Karma-Gnana yogi, i.e. know his role *coram Deo* and *coram homini* (before God and before man) correctly; but if he has no love, he must still strive towards it, because love is the basis of Bhakti, Karma and Gnana.

God is love and therefore His children also can live only in love. Man in love not only means that man shall show love to others, but even more important is the fact that man first has accepted the love of God, shown in Jesus Christ. Man must be definitely convinced of the truth that God has loved him before he loves his neighbour. This is how one should understand the greatest commands: love God and love neighbour. But how can one love his neighbour if he does not love God? And how can one love God at all? Is it possible to love God at all? How? Prayer, praise and Divine services are and can only be a response to what God has done. No man can ever love God of his own initiative. So, the imperative: Love God means respond to God's love. The New Testament says: "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8). There is only one way if man wants to be perfect; it is the way of love. Bhakti marga, Karma marga etc. are not wrong ways, but if they cannot lead a man to the way of love, then there is something wrong in them.

Man always feels his imperfection, he knows that he lacks something, inspite of all his works and achievements. The rich young man who came to Jesus wanted to know what he should do to inherit eternal life (Mt. 19: 16-26). Jesus told him to keep the commandments. The young man replied that he had kept the commandments. It is interesting to note that the young man was not quite happy about Jesus' reply; otherwise he could have happily replied: "I am happy that I have eternal life because I keep the

commandments." Rather he knew that inspite of keeping the commandments, he still lacked something. So he asked Jesus again, "All these I have observed. What do I still lack?" To that question Jesus replied and gave the law of love: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess....." Of course the young man would not do this. Thus, Jesus taught him that without love, law cannot be fully realized because the source of law is love and therefore the end of law also shall be love.

If one should have this love, he must have realized that salvation is *Sola Gratia*. In Hindu background salvation is through works; it is through Karma e.g. bathing in Ganges, pilgrimage to Holy places, Tapas, Prayer, offering etc. Salvation can also be attained through Bhakti' i.e. confession of sins, praising God, leaving bad habits, doing puja etc. Salvation is also through Gnana i.e. through meditation, learning of sacred books, yoga etc. If man knows that salvation is *Sola Gratia*, then his actions will not only be according to the law but more than that i.e. a self-sacrificing action of love.

Man is a being who cannot but desire something. While Buddha taught man to curb this desire and the Bhagavad Gita advocated Nishakamakarma (desireless action), Jesus taught man to use this desire positively i.e. to love one another. Any kind of religious life must come to this goal of the principle of love.

The three cardinal virtues of Christianity viz. faith, hope and love have their periods of special stress. The early church had experienced the importance of Christian hope in a special way. The reformation period had brought out the value of faith in an unprecedented manner. The modern cosmopolitan world, finds its meaning in the concept of love. At this background of love, the reformers' concept on works and unity of the church demand adjustment to the context.

Usually when the reformers talked about good works, they were conditioned to a large extent by their *Sitz im Leben*. Works were primarily meant as *Punya* (Righteousness), a merit that man can earn; it was a means by which man could further his surety for salvation. When one did good work, he showed his love for God. It also served as a reserve which man could deploy in times of need. There was a general view that one can accumulate his good works

like savings in a bank: the church had the right to draw on such accumulated merits of saints. Thus, there was a great danger for the Christians to think that these good works were their own, over against God's Grace. Luther proclaimed, that what is important is not work but faith, which produces the work.

Today, the situation is different. Christians do not bother about accumulating good works in order to earn a spiritual status or power. The problem of today is that man is losing his belief in the Scriptures and in the very existence of God. He questions whether there is a realm called the 'spiritual'.

In the reformation times, the bad works of a man was not so much publicised as it is today. At that time also there were acts of robbery, rape, murder, war and hunger but they were localised. Today man looks at the Newspaper and the Television and comes to know of all that happens all over the world. With every cruel act, man identifies himself with the one to whom it is done or the one who does it; it becomes suffering for him; it is a stress. It takes away his mental and spiritual strength because he comes to know of a terrible evil power working in man against what he holds to be the right view of life. So, it is not the life that is lived in Christ which is emphasised but the works that come out of it. Luther spent his life in demolishing the idea that good works can save a man. Today the church needs to build the concept of good works as consequences of spiritual life. With regard to the relation between faith and works Jesus Christ has emphasised both: 'You will know them by their fruits.....A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.' '(Mt. 7:16-18). It is not just enough to be a child of God if it cannot be shown in deeds. Empty Bhakti is of no value.

Unity

So also the emphasis on denominational and confessional aspects must give way to an ecumenical growth of the church. The church has the responsibility to help the atheists, agnostics, humanists, secularists etc. to find their way. It is meaningless that in this situation, those who believe in God emphasise different views,

constructing denominational walls within the church—those who emphasize the hierarchy of the church (Roman Catholics), those who stand for freedom in faith (Lutherans), those who emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit (Pentecostalists), those who stress the literal meaning of the scriptures (Evangelicals) and those who interpret it (Liberals). To add fuel to the fire, the sects and individual gurus also play their part in splitting the church into innumerable pieces.

The man for others

Today we have to look at man in his practical world; the theory world is giving way to the realities of life. The Youth movements show this direction. The most difficult thing and the first step in human fellowship is understanding. How far can one understand the other? Can the west understand the east and vice versa? Can the Hindus understand the Muslims or the evangelicals, the liberals or the educated, the uneducated, or the sacred, the secular; or the civilized, the aboriginals, one nation, the other, husband, his wife? It is very difficult to understand the other because one has to look at the other not subjectively but objectively, which is almost impossible for man. The first step to understand the neighbour and then to adjust one's life is the sum and substance of incarnation: When man did not return to God, God came to man. Therefore, it is always the burden of the stronger to adjust his ways to the weaker (Rom. 14) because to him more is given, more is expected. The ecumenical movement wants to further this understanding among one another.

Bonhoeffer delineates how the Reformation took a different direction from what Luther really intended it to achieve. He opines that Luther strove for the unity of the church and the western world; he also fought for the freedom of a Christian man in the clergy-dominated church. But what really happened was the destruction of this unity. Bonhoeffer agrees with Kierkegaard that Lutheran reformation would take a different direction today. He wrote :

Kierkegaard said more than a century ago that if Luther were alive then he would have said the exact opposite of what he said in the sixteenth century. I believe he was right—cum grano salis.¹¹⁶

Bonhoeffer wrote this statement on a Reformation day. It must be remembered that Bonhoeffer does not mean that Luther would say, if he were to come today, the very opposite: that faith is not important; what he means is that there would be a marked difference in Luther's expression of faith today.

Maturity

Humanity is involved in a process. Man is progressing towards a better future; the history of the world shows ample evidences for this movement. God is at work in the welfare of humanity. This idea of process has been well brought out by Bonhoeffer in his maxim: 'The world's coming of age' (*die Mundigkeit der Welt*).¹¹⁷ With this phrase Bonhoeffer seeks to usher in a new age where religion will no more be a duty but a joy, where Christians and non-Christians will find out a new relationship, where the boundaries of Christian concern will be enlarged. Bonhoeffer has clearly pointed out that Barth had failed to tackle this aspect, specially with regard to non-Christian or non-religious aspects in the world.¹¹⁸ Bonhoeffer has clearly expressed his views on non-Christians.¹¹⁹ Thus for a future development of an Indian Christian Theology in Indian context, Bonhoeffer could be of greater use than Barth. M. M. Thomas could have got more help from Bonhoeffer's idea of 'secularisation' than from Barth's; unfortunately many of Bonhoeffer's books are not translated into English as it is the case with Barth's.

In the first part of this chapter, it has been argued that man is a unity of body and spirit and that he is a 'spiritual' being.¹²⁰ So naturally a question arises as to the proper understanding of the term 'secular' here. Neither the definition that man is spiritual nor the definition that man is secular shall emphasise one aspect of man-either his body or his spirit-to the detrimental negligence of the other aspect. Man is a unity of body and spirit and never does he exist only as a part. Therefore, Bonhoeffer's term 'secular' here does not mean that man is no longer spiritual but that the spiritual-material man lives in a highly advanced scientific world where the concept of God comes into question. In fact, he himself, as a Christian, should live and act in this world as though there were no God.¹²¹

Bonhoeffer's concept of secularisation must be understood at the background of Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount, that religion gets its deeper meaning only when it is observed 'in secret' and not for the sake of others (Mt. 6).¹²²

The question: what is man, cannot be answered with a simple statement. Men are of different nature; some are good and some are bad. But is there any good man who is not bad and vice versa? Some may be really, exceptionally good and some exceptionally bad. But majority of the people are in between these two types; they are neither good nor bad, swinging between the extremes. One day they take a decision to be good and the next day they fall on the other way round. To make the situation complicated there are many who are outwardly good; everyone praises them and their acts but they are inwardly corrupt and there are others who are the other way round e. g. Pharisees and Jesus' disciples. Even Jesus Himself was reckoned with the criminals. So man is not what he looks like, not even what he does. In short, man is not what man is able to see i. e. man is not man in man's sight; man is man only in God's sight, in the light of God's revelation in and through Jesus Christ. Man is man only *coram Deo*. One dare not judge or evaluate man according to what he looks like. But every man knows at best himself; he knows what he is. It could be said that man can know at least himself.¹²³ But this also has handicaps. Some do not like to know what they are because they know it is only something bad. Some really attempt to introspect but they do not know how to do it. By nature introverts underestimate their own merits, while extroverts overestimate their abilities.

Extroverts feel they are right and good according to their own judgements while introverts usually feel they are always below their expectations. Man can never look at himself objectively; this is simply an illusion. Therefore man can make a fair judgement of himself only through the help of another concept. Then the question arises: which concept can be this other deciding factor? Indian context points to the society, communistic lands point to the economic order; capitalistic society sets on progress and religion points to God,

Usually religious laws help man to know himself. But different religions have laid down different laws and different 'isms' have different standards depending on their goal or aim. Today religions give way to secularistic movements and 'isms'. Man is increasingly losing his faith in God because of the following reasons :

- 1) Technology views cosmos in its own way.
- 2) Material wealth and thus a kind of security is set above the teachings of religion.
- 3) Scientific ideas are set against scriptural truths.
- 4) Religious fanaticism is a contradiction against religious ideas of love.
- 5) Religious hypocrisy has come to be revealed because of all people getting to know each other in a way unprecedented in the history of the world.
- 6) Democratic ideals and thus the importance of the individual is growing as against monarchical and patriarchal systems.

Scientific and technological advancements have brought the people closer together and man feels that he belongs to the one family of humanity. Differences of his credal ideas begin to fade before the sunshine of love; ecumenical movements and inter-cultural programmes point to this direction. This is, of course, a movement forward in the history of humanity.

At this juncture, the growth of small groups, within churches and societies is taking place. Earlier the church was a gathering place where people met for religious-cum-social functions. Today this function is partly fulfilled by places like swimming pools, theatres, cinemas, administrative and industrial buildings.¹²⁴ Thus, because secularism could overtake religion, it is no longer bothered about ethical standards; at least the perfection ideal is lost. In one way it is good; in the name of religion there can be no more war or exploitation or hypocrisy. But, on the other hand, along with this trend some human values are also vanishing e.g. exhortation, confession, forgiveness, living for one another. This secular process

does not produce saints like Augustine, Francis of Assisi and Sadhu Sundar Singh but an average society. Thus humanity is moving from individual to corporate aspect of living together. It is no longer the individual genius who gives pride to his nation but the nation as a whole. Thus unity has become a matter of nation, people, language, race, colour and religion.

However a lot of cultural and social intermingling is happening. People understand each other much better now than it was in previous centuries. Man seeks to know his nature in this complicated situation of intermingling.

Society controls and decides the conscience of man. Though man has not lost his spiritual conscience, he does not find it conducive. Therefore, some do not like to go to church. The church only demands a higher ethical life ; but it does not help one, who lives in a dreadful surrounding with all kinds of temptations, to live such a life. So two groups of people leave the church : those who oppose hypocrisy and those who are against the strict laws of religion.

In this situation, man has, naturally, little interest to know who he is. Majority of the people just want to move with the crowd and pull on life, as far as possible, without problem. Having passed through two world wars, man knows that the end of the world may be at any time; for if it is a nuclear war today, it means total catastrophe. Increasingly man is coming into the danger of forgetting his spiritual needs. There are drug addicts, psychiatry cases, alcoholics etc. Schizophrenia can be better understood at the background of unharmonised man with body and soul than only with a psychological background. The church's role is great in these areas.

After crossing all these borders, when man looks at himself, he sees a contradiction-he desires what he does not like and he hates what he really wants. There is a contradiction not only between his desire and act but already between his real desire and his outward desire. There are a few who resolve this contradiction ; but they are very much appreciated by the society but not accepted or understood by the society.

Two problems are to be understood in the light of love viz. Mission and indigenisation. It was said that man in early times lived like a frog in the well i.e. he lived in a place in one of the continents and thought that that was the whole world. His Weltanschauung was limited because he did not know the other side of the world. But the normal man today knows of the large dimension of the world with its various languages, religions, cultures and thus different kinds of world views. However, man has not become so cosmic in nature that he can both understand and accept the other cultures and ways of life. He is tragically limited in this possibility of cosmic understanding. Though he may be said to have come out of his "well" and can look at the external world, he has dug for himself artificial boring pumps in order to sustain his life. Man needs, inspite of all cosmic understanding, a certain social structure, a language to communicate his ideas and some people who will recognise him as belonging to them. Above all he wants to fit himself into a particular pattern of living e.g. communistic, capitalistic, atheistic, theistic etc. The crucial point is reached in the selection of his life-job. He takes to a way of life either as a technician or as a politician or as a teacher, or as a merchant etc. The kind of work he is engaged in, decides his knowledge. He specialises either in the functioning of textile machine or teaching or computer science or a branch of theology. Today it is possible to subdivide all these functions and specialise in one branch of it, e.g. nervous system in medical science. Subdivision and fragmentation is not only a problem in Indian economics but has become the hallmark of education today. Man lived in a different kind of 'well' earlier, today he strikes his own boring pumps to live with; both lie in the same direction-anti-cosmic in nature. Individualism lies very close to selfish way of life. It is not wrong to specialise in one field, but to allow this knowledge to decide his Weltanschauung is not right. Earlier, man lived in his own 'well' (Egypt or Babylon or Greece) and did not know the external world but still he knew what was in this 'well' His knowledge was not deep but it was wide; it can be said that the very fact that his knowledge was not deep made him or enabled him to accept a wider society. Today man's knowledge has grown to that extent (so deep) that he begins to think that his is the only right way of life. The more one

specialises in one field, the greater is the vulnerability to leave other branches out of sight. Where is the possibility for conversion in this context? Earlier conversion was confined because of lack of knowledge; today conversion is limited because of knowledge. Conversion is possible only when one can look away from his life-knowledge (world-view). So far as man looks at his own structure of life, there is no possibility for conversion. Dialogue can play an important role here.¹²⁵ Man must allow himself to be influenced by other ways of life; he must be open to other forces of life.¹²⁶ In India this openness is closed by caste and national barriers. For a long time it was not possible for a non-Hindu to become a Hindu. But today there are 'Missions' from India to other countries. There are many Yoga and Transcendental meditation groups; strictly speaking, these movements cater mainly to the emotional and intellectual dimensions in man and not his religious dimension. Since they do not offer a way of life as Hinduism or Buddhism, those who flock to these 'movements' remain in it for sometime. Though Ramakrishna Mission offers religious way of life, it is not as successful as the former two kinds of groups.

Now that India has abolished caste system legally and has begun to propagate its religious tenets in other parts of the world and acquire members for the same, the Hindus also must come out of their caste and national barriers. The time is coming when man shall throw himself open to other influences. This does not mean that he should not be strong in the belief in which he is. It is one thing to be strong in one's belief and it is another thing to keep oneself open to others. Man should try to understand man in other society, culture, religion and continent. To accept other people and to recognise their way of life is as important as to pass on to them one's own views and way of life. The depth of man's knowledge shall not serve as a detriment against the vastness of his knowledge.

Mission is God's; man is only His messenger. Therefore missionaries will have to refrain from insulting the other, his religion or culture. Christ's mission is seen in His incarnation, not to insult man but to become one like him, though it meant to become like a

sinner I (II Cor. 5). The success of a mission is not to be counted in terms of converts but in proclaiming God's love to man. Mission is over when one has made his neighbour realise that God loves him. Mission does not consist only in proclamation but in living and doing. Mission is not to be confined to clergy alone; it belongs to the congregation as a whole. Denominational interests must give way to a Christian spirit in mission work. In short, mission must be set in an atmosphere of Christian love.

The problem of indigenisation also needs to be tackled in Christian love. The way in which indigenisation has been tackled so far lies almost in a negative direction. The policy of the early Mission was to consider 'all' that is Hindu as rubbish-its religious writings, temple structures, festivals like Deepavali, Pongal etc.¹²⁷ Later there was not much opposition but a silent neglect. Farquahar brought a new turn in the process of indigenisation when he attempted to interpret Christianity as 'the crown of Hinduism'. Kraemer feared syncretism. Chenchiah, Chakkarai and Appasamy interpreted Christianity from Indian-Hindu Background, making comparisons-Devanandan wanted Dialogue. The World Council of Churches held in New Delhi in 1964 saw 'small lights' in Hinduism while Christ was proclaimed as the light. While R. Panikkar found that Christ was already present in Hinduism though 'unknown', M. M. Thomas tried to establish that Christ was even 'acknowledged' in the Indian renaissance. Panikkar tried to establish his view from Hindu religious scriptures viz. Brahma Sutras; Thomas traced his view in the socio-political development of India from R. R. Mohun Roy to Mahatma Gandhi. The present Archbishop of Mylapore (Madras) of the Catholic Church is convinced that the ancient Tamil Poet Tiruvalluvar of the Christian era (c.a. A.D. 100) must have been influenced by Christianity.¹²⁸ But this method of always holding one religion against the other is not at all necessary. Why should one always compare one Christian view with one Hindu thought (e.g. interpreting John's Gospel as Bhakti marga) or find out two verses in the Brahma sutras which stand for interpreting Christ or to delineate how far Hindu leaders like Roy and Sen were influenced by Christianity? This comparison (Auseinandersetzung) is not at all needed for evangelism or for indigenisation.

Mission has a message ; this message needs to be clothed in a language with words and thought forms. The message needs to be presented in Indian languages in India ; when this is done a great part of indigenisation is already achieved. In fact, words like Mukti, Karma, Bhakti etc. are common for all the languages in India and thus every Indian would be benefited to know its meanings. One need not compare the meaning of these words in both religions but just use them in the proper place. To set Christianity always in opposition to Hinduism by pointing out the similarities is also not needed. Hindus will be very happy to hear the Christian message as it comes in its own strength ; it does not need the backing of Hindu scriptures—normal or artificial. What is needed is not a scientific proof of the similarities of the two religions but the value of a new way of life that Christianity could offer.

It is encouraging that many of the theological seminaries have recently switched over to regional languages as theological medium of instruction a real Indian Christian theology can be expected only in this process. This is real indigenisation—to think in Indian terms and to express theology in an Indian language. Mission must leave off all comparisons, setting Christianity in conscious encounter (*Auseinandersetzung*) with Hinduism. What is needed is a clear message of Jesus Christ's saving power in Indian Situation. The best indigenisation of Christianity in India is not to make an Indian theology, not even to preach Christ but to live as a Christian. India gives more importance to life than to teachings or doctrines. However, words are part of life and therefore must fulfil their part. Dialogue can bring better results when both the partners have a common platform to stand e.g, Catholics and Protestants or secularists and humanists. Dialogue also demands a good standard of knowledge of both religions. 'Village theologians' rightly speak of 80 per cent of the Indian people living in rural areas¹²⁹ and more than 50 per cent of Indian population as uneducated. There is no doubt that dialogue finds interest here and there. But this cannot be the main method of evangelisation in India today. A better method, ofcourse, lies in the service of the Christians to their Hindu neighbours. "Not to be served but to serve" is the best method of evangelisation in India today.¹³⁰

Finding out the central aspects of the Gospel, Moritzen gives the following points viz : divine service, meditation, love for the neighbour etc. According to him, love for the neighbour has been accepted by many as the final aim and thus it shall serve mission. He calls this aspect the 'realisation of faith'. Bhakti or faith can, thus, be realised only through love towards neighbour. This love for the neighbour should not be made dependent on special circles related to the helper but must be totally free from all reasons based on family, race, colour, religion, caste etc.; the only legitimate reason is the need of the neighbour and his situation.¹³¹

Bonhoeffer's pithy phrase ' *die muendige Welt* ' needs special attention ; it is a pregnant concept which would lead humanity to a new age altogether where the understanding of God and man will be very different from what one can witness today. However, this idea is only in an embryonic stage now. It could be better understood only at the background of Bonhoeffer's concept of God, ' religionless Christianity ' and ' wordly interpretation ' of religion.¹³³ He was a strong believer in God ; he was more than a bhakta. Though he did not think that he will become 'homo religiosus' he cherished bhakti traits like making signs of cross and singing songs of piety because he considered them as Lutheran.¹³⁴ His dialectical view of God is clearly seen in the following statement.

*God is teaching us that we must live as men who can get along very well without him. The God who is with us is the God who forsakes us (Mark 15:34). The God who makes us live in this world without using him as a working hypothesis is the God before whom we are ever standing. Before God and with him we live without God.*¹³⁵

By this phrase Bonhoeffer suggests that theologians shall no longer confine themselves to a detailed analysis of the concept of God but get themselves involved with the realities of the world. Pannenberg is not far from this idea when he proposes the understanding of God's revelation in and through human history.¹³⁶

God has loved the world (John 3:16). The word "Welt" in Bonhoeffer's dictum : ' *die muendige Welt* ', stands for man. So the English translation can be 'man come of age'. The German

phrase, however, is difficult to be translated. It envisages the context of not just one man or a Christian man, or even the whole humanity but a new world view. In fact, it points to a new world where God is at work, where not only God's Fatherhood is recognized but man's brotherhood also.¹⁸⁷ This is the very purpose of the Logos becoming flesh. Although the Son of God was not accepted by His own (John 1:11), through His death and resurrection, He is making the whole world His own.

The Biblical concept of God has always been crossing its boundaries, thereby, leading men to new aeons. Abraham taught his people to believe in the One God and became the father of all believers. Amos taught that this God directs not only the history of the Jews (descendents of Abraham) but the history of other nations too. People found it difficult to accept Amos but slowly they realized that he was a prophet. Later on, Peter revealed that God can give His spirit even to those who were considered to be 'heathen'. Paul established that one need not become a Jew (circumcision) in order to belong to the people of God. Later Luther taught that it is not by works but by faith that one is accepted by God. That is to say, not through any external proof that a man is saved but through his internal faith in God. External works do not precede the internal conviction but vice versa. Therefore, the internal conviction is important and must be correct. Bonhoeffer envisages a new humanity where God is at work and therefore the whole world is becoming mature. Man attains his spiritual maturity. This means he will enter a new age of freedom which will also mean a new responsibility. The Logos no longer needs or wants to pitch its tent in one part of the world but it wants to dwell and guide everyman in this world, thus creating a new world.

Conclusion

It may be mentioned that there is no need for a conclusion because the author's view on anthropology serves as his concluding remarks on the theological anthropology of the seven Indian Christian theologians dealt with in this study. However, it must be borne in mind that the author's own anthropology is not the last word on the

concept of man in India today. The concept of man is such a bewildering study that, having said all that he wants to say, one rather stands still with the question: what is man? God is the author of human history and it is He Who will bring it to its end. Man has not created himself nor can he bring himself to perfection inspite of all his freedom to act. But thanks be to God, who steers the history of humanity in that He has already given a hope for the salvation of humanity in and through Jesus Christ. Man need not despair that he has not been able to understand himself perfectly. Man's knowledge is not perfect; he has understood only a partial reality (I. Cor. 13:9,12). But man can believe that he can know himself even as he is known.

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. (I. Cor. 13:12)

The author has tried to write his anthropology in which attempt he has used many Indian terms—both Sanskrit and Tamil. Usually he has criticised the Indian view of man as that which does not treat the body of man as God's 'good' creation but is only a prison of the soul. Though this may be the general trend in India, there are exceptions also. It is surprising to note that the early Dravidian literature, namely Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar seems to show another strand of thought i.e. that the body of man and his soul are like bride and bridegroom. The following Kurals support such a view viz. Kural 330, 940 and 1122.¹

A depth—level study of Tirukkural in its context will throw more interesting light on the concept of man in the ancient South Indian culture.

1. cf A. Frenz and K. Lalithambal' Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar, op. cit., pp. 33,94,113

EXPLANATION OF INDIAN TERMS

The importance of using Indian terms had already been discussed.¹ The seven Indian theologians, handled in this study, have used many different Indian terms; these terms are explained only with simple meanings. The meanings of these terms are also given in brackets as they occur in the text for the first time. But the author has used terms like yogi, bhakta etc. which need more clarification are handled in this chapter.

At the outset it must be pointed out that though Indian terms are used in forming an Indian anthropology, the words are filled with Christian contents. The method adopted, in general, is that of John the Evangelist. John used the word 'Logos' in his prologue (Jn, 1:1-18). The concept logos was famous in the then known Greek world. Logos was an intermediary between God and man. But whether one could equate Logos with Jesus was a problematic question. But John took this concept and boldly wrote; "in the beginning was the Logos, the Logos was with God and the Logos was God." (Jn. 1:1). Such an abrupt beginning with a heathen concept in the Gospel could have sounded objectionable to some Christian of the first century. Of course, a Jew could have understood and accepted the concept of 'Dabar' better than 'Logos'. However, John used it but he plucked the term from its original context and gave it a new content. The Greek concept 'Logos', could be accepted as an intermediary between God and man, revealing God to man; otherwise there was no possibility for man to know God. But what the Greek Logos could not do the Johannine Logos has done i.e. it became flesh (Jn. 1:14). Thus John accepted' on the one hand, a positive content of the term Logos and infused into it a Christian meaning. Thus he was bold to use the term 'Logos'. This same method can be found in the following explanations also.

Yogi

For a clearer understanding of the term yogi, as it stands in Hindu religion, the following references can be of help:

1. B. Tiliander, op. cit., pp. 55, 166 ff
2. S. Chatterjee and D. Datta, op. cit., pp. 289-311
3. T. M.P. Mahadevan, op. cit., pp. 83 ff, 124 ff
4. B. Walker, op. cit., II, pp. 616 ff
5. K. Klostermeier, Hinduismus, Verlag J. P. Bachem, Koeln, 1965, pp. 252-269

Indian anthropology usually undermines the role of body. In the spiritual growth of man, body is only a hindrance. Therefore it has to be mortified and oppressed, in order that the soul may become free. Among the six systems of philosophy none gives an importance due to body. The school of philosophy that, if at all, talks of body as something which could be trained, not mortified in order to help the spiritual life, is Yoga philosophy. Of course, the spirit or soul of man gets emphasis in all the six systems. Therefore in order to bring home the positive role of body, the word yoga happens to be the only choice. Secondly, the root meaning of yoga is 'union' or 'concentration'. With this root meaning, an interpretation of man as a unity of body and spirit is very conducive and understandable.

However, the idea that body is only a means to serve spiritual development is to be avoided. It is neither the body nor the spirit but the person who is to be held responsible for all actions. Thus yoga is not just a method to achieve an end but it is existence itself.

Bhaktayogi

For a general knowledge of the Indian term 'bhakti' the following sources may be of help:

1. B. Tiliander, op. cit., pp. 55, 66, 216 ff
2. B. Walker, op. cit., pp. 138 f
3. K. Klostermeier, op. cit., pp. 195-220

4. A. J. Appasamy, *The Theology of Hindu Bhakti*, CLS, 1970

5. S. Neill, *Bhakti: Hindu and Christian*, CLS. Madras, 1974

Bhakti is a very comprehensive term, It is difficult to give a precise definition to it. Tiliander aptly remarks:

*Bhakti is a pregnant term. It stands for man's deepest attitude to the divine reality. Bhakti can be defined as Vita religiosa and a bhakta as Homo religiosus.*³

Apart from human - divine bhakti, one can talk of a lady's bhakti to her husband (Patibhakti) and a student's bhakti to his teacher (Gurubhakti) also. Unfortunately Tiliander does not seem to have known this.³ The term bhakti can be translated as faith, love, devotion etc. A bhakta is one who can be called a devotee i.e. one who is caught in this faith-love-devotion to God.

The Christian idea of faith is, thus, contained in this term bhakti. Man is primarily a creature dependent on God. This idea is also hidden in the meaning of bhakti. Bhakti literature is full of confessions of sin and the realisation that man is essentially a sinner, in need of God's grace. Thus a bhakta yogi or bhakta concept comes very close to the Christian concept of a Christian. One danger to be avoided in this concept is, of course, that it should not be confined to mystical experiences only but include the necessary actions that are the replica of bhakti. Tiliander has rightly pointed out that bhakti concept gives little value to corporate ethics.⁴ Bhakti should also be explained in terms of corporate living-together and not confined to individual relationship with God.

Karmayogi

The term karma is the most often used word in India. On the one hand, it stands for a positive view of good works; so one can talk of Mahatma Ghandhi as a Karmayogi. But on the other hand it stands for the fate-aspect of man i.e. his past deeds, probably from previous birth which bring into force the retribution of his evil deeds. Here, in this study, the term Karmayogi is used only in one sense i.e. in the positive attitude to good works. The negative view of

Karma as the Universal Law which punishes every evil deed, is used under the concept of bondage from which Jesus delivers mankind; in that sense Karma is bondage to sin. Thus the Hindu term karma stands close to the Christian idea of good works and the Christian concept of Law.

The following sources can be of help in explaining the Hindu view of Karma:

1. B. Tiliander, op. cit., pp. 154 ff
2. B. Walker, op. cit., I, pp. 529 f
3. T. M.P. Mahadevan, op. cit., pp. 57 ff
4. K. Klostermeier, op. cit., pp. 185-194

Gnanayogi

The term gnana has clarity of meaning, unlike the other terms. It means wisdom. Gnanamarga is the way to salvation through wisdom. Gnanayogi is one who accepts the value of intellect and acts accordingly. However, gnana stands not only for the intellectual (geistig) aspect but also for the spiritual (geistlich) aspect.⁵

In this study the term gnana means both intellectual and spiritual i.e. the term Gnanayogi can be translated as a person who understands spiritually. The following sources can be of help to understand the meaning of the term gnana:

1. B. Tiliander' op, cit., pp. 60-64
2. F.M.P. Mahadevan, op. cit.; pp. 94 f
3. K. Klostermeier, op. cit., pp. 159-170

Anban

This a Tamil word; it is preferred against other Indian terms because it comes close to the meaning of the term 'agape' in the New Testament. Of course, Anbu (love) is not an exact equivalent of agape but 'Anbu has the same ambiguous meaning as Agape'.⁶ The word Anban has a double meaning; it means, on the one hand,

a person who is beloved and on the other hand, who one loves. Actually, it can be translated as one who has love. Thus it comes very close to the Christian concept of love. Man cannot love his neighbour, if he has not experienced the love of God in himself; so man is Anban.

However, in this dissertation, the word Anban is also used in another sense i.e. in the sense of Bonhoeffer's dictum 'man come of age'. Tiliander rightly remarks that Anbu and Bhakti stand in close proximity in Tamil literature; he even calls Anbu as 'synonym' of Bhakti.⁷ Thus a Christian who believes in God (Bhakta) and practises his faith in God through his works towards his neighbours (Karmayogi) and understands the necessity of standing related to God and man simultaneously (Gnanayogi), also realises that he lives in this world as a Christian 'as if' (*etsi deus daretur*) 'there were no God'.⁸ This is the man who can be called Anban - one who believes in a God who came 'not to be served but to serve, (Mk. 10:45). He is one who practises his 'religion' not in order that others may know his religiosity but one who practises his religion in secret; he prays to God 'who sees in secret', gives alms and knows that the 'Father who sees in secret', knows it and fasts because God sees him 'in secret' (Mt. 6:1-18). Anban is thus one who is deeply spiritual and externally looks secular; he is one who has an unshakable belief in God but humbly serves his neighbour. For a clearer understanding of the Tamil word Anban, the following reference can be of help :

1. B. Tiliander, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-227

Sarira

Sarira means body. Since body has a negative content in India, the positive aspect of body as God's good creation has been brought in this study: However, Sarira represents the weakness of man in that it stands for the 'earthly' (Adamah) aspect of man. Of course, this can be understood only at the background of jiva as Neshamah of God.

Jiva

Jiva means life-principle (Neshamah) or Uyr. It is set in the Indian understanding of Atman. According to Hindu religion, man is jivatman. But in this dissertation, jiva represents the 'spiritual' nature of man as against his material nature being represented by Sarira. Of course, it must always be understood that man is neither Sarira nor jiva but a unity i.e. Sarira-jiva/Yogi.

(More particulars on the above terms are to be found in the author's anthropology).



**Meanings of other Indian terms used by the
seven Indian theologians**

adesa	—	inspiration
adipurusha	—	original man, person
advaita	—	non-dualism
ahamkara	—	egoism
ahimsa	—	non-violence
ananda	—	joy, bliss
antaratman	—	inner spirit
antarayamin	—	the one who dwells within and rules from within
anubhava	—	experience
artha	—	meaning, wealth
atman	—	soul
avatar	—	incarnation
bhakta	—	devotee
bhakti	—	loving devotion to God
bhaktimarga	—	the way of attaining salvation through devotion
brahmachari	—	celibate student
cit	—	intelligence
darsan	—	vision
dharma gnana	—	religion, duty, ethic
gnana	—	knowledge
gnanamarga	—	the way of attaining salvation through knowledge
guru	—	a religious teacher
jiva	—	life, soul
jivatman	—	the human soul
karma	—	act, fruit of action, retribution
karmamarga	—	the way of attaining salvation through works

mahavakya	—	great saying
maya	—	illusion, seeming reality
moksha	—	Himmel, salvation
mukti	—	release, salvation
nishkamakarma	—	desireless action
papa	—	sin
paramatman	—	the supreme soul
prakriti	—	matter
punarjanma	—	rebirth
purusha	—	person, man, husband
sakti	—	power
sastra	—	scripture, theology
sruti	—	scripture
sabha	—	association
satchitananda	—	being-intelligence-bliss
sadhana	—	religious exercise
samipya	—	being near to God
sankhya	—	one of the six systems of Indian philosophy
samsara	—	entanglement in the world, the life-cycle, wife
sannyasi	—	one who has renounced the world
sarupya	—	being like God
sat	—	being, existence
satya	—	truth
sayujya	—	complete union with God
sthula sarira	—	material body
sukshma sarira	—	subtle body
trimurthi	—	the Hindu triad of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva
uyir	—	life-principle
yajna	—	sacrifice
yoga	—	union, concentration

ABBREVIATIONS

CISRS	—	Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society
CLS	—	Christian Literature Society
CSI	—	Church of South India
CTM	—	Concordia Theological Monthly
ICT	—	An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology
IJT	—	Indian Journal of Theology
LWF	—	Lutheran World Federation
NCC	—	National Christian Council
NCCR	—	National Christian Council Review
NT	—	New Testament
OR	—	Oekumenische Rundschau
OT	—	Old Testament
RGG	—	Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RS	—	Religion and Society
SPECK	—	Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge
TELC	—	Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church
WCC	—	World Council of Churches

FOOT - NOTES

Introduction

1. *Infra*. p. 37
2. cf. H. Wagner, *Erstgestalten einer einheimischen Theologie in Suedindien*
3. cf. J. Wiaetzke, *Theologie im modernen Indien*-Paul David Devanandan
4. cf. O. V. Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event and the Universality of Christianity in a World of Religious Plurality*.
5. Anthropology in the Bhagavadgita has the following main points viz. Man-the divine self-contact with matter-different natures and functions of man-castes-sin-karma-gnana-bhakti-rites-svadharma (duties of life)-yoga-meditation-Nishkama-karma (desireless action)-transmigration-karma-Samsara-moksha ; but antropology in Christian theology has the following main points viz. Man-creature-Imago Dei-Sinner-Law and Gospel-justificaton-church-baptism-Lord's Supper-Christian life in the spirit-expecting Return of Christ-Last Judgement-emternal life).
6. It is to be noted that a catholic scholar has made his dissertation on the contributions of Indian theologians-both catholic and protestant. cf. A. Mockenthottam, *Indian theological tendencies*.
7. *Theology of the New Testament*, SCM Press, London, 1959, p. 191

CHAPTER I

I. APPASAMY'S ANTHROPOLOGY

1. H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 11
2. A. Bishop's Story, pp. 1-5
3. Though Appasamy does not recognise any Lutheran influence in his life in his biography, his contacts with the theological Professors in Germany should have contributed a good deal to his thoughts. It is not encouraging, however, to see that in his whole autobiography, Appasamy with his Anglican background does not deal even a few paragraphs in explaining his relationship with the Lutherans. In his description of the church union, he could have given his views on the fact of the conspicuous absence of the Lutherans. While mentioning his meeting with Rev. B. F. Tiliander also, Appasamy does not recognise him as a Missionary of the local Lutheran Church, but only as a member of the Swedish Lutheran Church *ibid.*, p. 166.
4. *ibid.*, pp. 4-57, 81. For more information on Appasamy's works cf. H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 296 and A Bishop's Story, p. 186
5. What is Moksha? p. 91; Christianity as Bhakti Marga, p. 20f; Mookenthottam, p. 256, note 423
6. A. Mookenthottam, *op. cit.*, p. 121; Appasamy, The Christian Task in Independent India, pp. 4, 36
7. Dr. Hoerschelmann has cited J. Daniel, son of N. Daniel as a sectarian leader, a Christian "guru"; Hoerschelmann, cf. Christliche gurus, pp. 199 f
8. A Bishop's Story, pp. 99-104

9. *ibid.*, p. 102
10. *ibid.*, pp. 84-99
11. *ibid.*, pp. 112 ff
12. *ibid.*, p. 29
13. *ibid.*, p. 160 f
14. *ibid.*, p. 8
15. *ibid.*, p. 96
16. Temple Bells, pp. 27, 34, 61, 70 ; The Gospel and India's Heritage, pp. 131 ff ; Wagner, op. cit. p. 49f ; What is Moksha? pp. 98 f
17. Temple Bells pp. 48 ff. Bhakti cults, in Hinduism, usually choose one of the gods as 'kula devam' or ista devata (family god) and this god becomes the sole attraction of the bhakta. Though a Hindu does not deny the existence of other gods, and hears gladly about the nature and works of other gods from friends and neighbours, he also tells the glories of his own god. Though Vivekananda says that conversion is unnecessary, in Hinduism itself, conversion is possible. Families worshipping one kuladeivam move to the worship of another kuladeivam or annex the worship of the other with the previous one.
18. What shall we believe? p. 16
19. What is Moksha? p. 116
20. To Luther, God's own nature is love and grace while His alien property is wrath and condemnation.
21. The Gospel and India's Heritage, pp. 110f
22. *ibid.*, p. 35f ; What is Moksha? pp. 44f ; Boyd, ICT, p. 120
23. The Gospel and India's Heritage, p. 38
24. *ibid.* p. 37
25. cf. Boyd, ICT, p. 81 ; Brahmanandav based his theology on Advaitic basis.
26. The Gospel and India's Heritage, pp. 256-264

27. B. Tiliander, *Christian and Hindu Terminology*, pp. 216-227
cf. B. Walker, *The Hindu World*, I, p. 138
28. B. Walker terms the varied groups of people who lived in
India before the Aryans came, as Anaryans who have contri-
buted a great deal on the worship of Siva-Vishnu.
29. Of course, in Hinduism one can find references where the
moral aspect in Bhakti is not rightly stressed e.g. Bhakti
Puranas.
30. What is Moksha?, p. 68
31. What shall we believe? p. 54
32. The Gospel and India's Heritage, p. 125
33. Christianity as Bhakti Marga, p. 110
34. cf. Boyd, ICT, p. 125. The Gospel and India's Heritage,
pp. 74f What is Moksha? p. 172f
35. What is Moksha? pp. 172-182
36. What shall we believe? p. 48
37. Wagner, op. cit., p. 102f cf. also O. V. Jathana, The Decisi-
veness of the Christ-Event and the Universality of Christia-
nity in a world of religious plurality, pp. 470-481. Jathanna
proposes a deeper study of the concept of "Rebirth" with a
view to accommodating the universality of Christianity and
the once-for-all act of Jesus Christ.
38. What shall we believe? pp. 31-36
39. *Ibid.*, p. 51
40. *ibid.*, pp. 37-43
41. *Ibid.*, p. 43
42. *ibid.*, pp. 50-55
43. *ibid.*, p. 50
44. Boyd, ICT, p. 138. However, it must be borne in mind, that
the N.T. is only a historical continuity of the O.T. and for a
right historical and spiritual understanding of the N.T., the
O.T. is unavoidable.

45. However, in order to explain the relationship of Christ and His Church, in its present context with its multifarious denominations and the problems of indigenisation, church union talks-federal and organic etc., one could best use the analogy of the seed of the banyan tree (pointing to Christ) and the banyan tree (to the Church).
46. A Bishop's Story, p. 4. But such a segregation of life into compartment of schooling, housing, intuiting and renouncing the world is almost impossible and not advisable also; for mostly they coincide or run into each other. Of course, a man begins his life in learning as a celibate; this career should not be stopped until the end of life. But then one may get into family life or sanyasa or vanaprastha life (for example, the life of Sankara or Vivekananda or Sadhu Sundar Singh). Even family life should not debar one from entering into other stages of life as and when necessary. It is not four stages of life but four main ingredients of life.
47. Wagner, op. cit., p. 62
48. *ibid.*, pp. 37f
49. Boyd, ICT, p. 125
50. *ibid.*, p. 143



CHAPTER II

CHENCHIAH'S ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Though Chenchiah was a brahmin by birth, he counted the joy of being a Christian greater than the pride of his own caste. For detailed biography of Chenchiah cf. D.A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah*, pp. vii-xix and H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-15
2. Chenchiah in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 52, Appendix, pp. 10-19; Thangasamy, *op. cit.*, pp. 134 ff
3. Gurukul, *A Christian Theological Approach to Hinduism*, *op. cit.*, 51 f
4. Thangasamy, *op. cit.*, pp. 70 f, 248 f. It seems that Chenchiah used to attend the Lutheran church at Pudukkottai and during the sermon, because it did not appeal to his taste, closed his eyes and was immersed in his own meditation. This information was given by Rev. B. F. Tiliander, who was a missionary in Pudukkottai.
5. The full name of Master CVV is Kanchupati Venkata Rao. Venkatasamy Rao
6. For more bibliographical information cf. Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 296 f
7. *Rethinking*, p. 53
8. Thangasamy, *op. cit.*, p. 104
9. *Rethinking*, pp. 53, 60
10. *ibid.*, p. 10 f
11. *ibid.*, p. 53 f
12. *ibid*
13. cf. Boyd, *ICT*, p. 152

14. Rethinking, p. 60 f
15. *ibid.*, p. 56; Thangasamy, p. 217 f, Boyd, ICT, p. 156
16. The Guardian, 6 Feb. 1947
17. *ibid*
18. *ibid*
19. Thangasamy, p. 22 f
20. "Der Mensch im Uebergang"; Wagner, op. cit., p. 123
21. ".....was fuer die Arier Karma ist, ist fuer die Juden Suende.,
Wagner, loc. cit.
22. Rethining, p. 54
23. *ibid.*, p. 55 f; Thangasamy, p. 70 f
24. Rethinking, p. 60
25. Thangasamy, p. 18 f; Thangasamy, dealing with Chenchiah's
views on spiritual evolution, finds a close relationship
between Chenchiah and Teilhard de Chardin, Bergson and
Sri Aurobindo. cf. Thangasamy, pp. 20-23
26. Wagner, op. cit., p. 123; translated by Ptof. Moritzen
27. Rethinking. Appendix, p. 26
28. Thangasamy, p. 59
29. Rethinking, Appendix, p. 27
30. *ibid.*, p. 56f; cf. Boyd, ICT, 155f. It may be possible to say
that Chenchiah advocates a 'yoga marga'
31. Quoted by Boyd, ICT, p. 162
32. Rethinking, pp. 86f and Thangasamy, pp. 151f
33. Thangasamy, loc. cit
34. Rethinking, p. 86f
35. Wagner, op. cit., p. 124
36. This is Prof. Moritzen's comment which the author noted
during an oral discussion with him. cf. Klostermeier, Hin-
duism, pp. 40ff
37. Thangasamy, p. 38

38. Thangasamy, p. 133
39. cf. Boyd, ICT, p. 147
40. Rethinking, p. 59f
41. Boyd, ICT, p. 151
42. cf. V. P. Thomas. 'Indian Christian Approaches to the Knowledge of Christ' in the Indian Journal of Theology, Jan., 1969, p. 97
43. Rethinking, Appendix, p. 27
44. *ibid.*, p. 60
45. Thangasamy, p. 23. Gosling does not accept the idea that genetics has to do with religion. He confines the study of genetics to the physiological birth process of children and not to their spiritual birth. cf. D. L. Gosling, Science and Religion in India, CISRS-CLS, Madras, 1976, pp. 69, 163

CHAPTER III

CHAKKARAI'S ANTHROPOLOGY

1. For a detailed biography of Chakkarai cf. P. T. Thomas, *The Theology of Chakkari*, pp. 1-6; H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17; Boyd., *ICT*, pp. 165 f.
2. These two books are, hereafter, cited with the underlined words only.
3. Many of his articles are published in the 'Guardian' and three of his important articles are published in the book: *Rethinking Christianity in India*, ed. by A.N. Sudarisanam.
4. for a detailed bibliography of Chakkarai's writings cf. H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 298 f; R. Boyd, *ICT*, p. 343 f.
5. *The Guardian*, 20th April 1944
6. *Avatar*, pp. 117 ff
7. P. T. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 36
8. cf. his article on 'the Resurrection of our Lord: *ibid.*, pp. 67-74
9. *op. cit.* P. T. Thomas, p. 70
10. *Avatar*, pp. 141 f
11. P. T. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 71
12. *Avatar*, p. 33 f
13. *ibid*,
14. *ibid*, p. 35
15. *ibid.*, p. 73
16. *ibid.*, p. 73 f

17. Avatar, p. 37. If one understands prayer as a practical realisation of man *coram Deo*, then Chakkarai seems to be nearer to Luther.
18. P. T. Thomas, op. cit., p. 80
19. in Pauline theology, it probably corresponds to 'flesh' and 'spirit'
20. *ibid.*, p. 69
21. *ibid.*, p. 69f
22. Avatar, p. 163
23. Cross, p. 279
24. Thomss, op. cit., p. 59
25. Cross, p. 55. There is a general trend in India to emphasise the role and function of the spirit at the expense of Christ, of the Word, and of the means of salvation ; e.g. the sectarian, revivalist groups. Sometimes this emphasis is done over against the value of reason. Jesus' statement: 'The spirit will teach you all things' (Jn. 14:26) is exploited to the maximum. Sometimes the power of the spirit is treated in a way that the power of the cross is fading.
26. Avator, pp. 162f
27. *ibid.*, p. 116
28. P. T. Thomas, op. cit., p. 55
29. Cross, p. 273
30. P. T. Thomas, op. cit., p. 52. But apart from this, one should be clear in his conscience. In the Indian background conscience plays a dominant role ; but the upbuilding of conscience is mostly a personal matter by the Indwelling Spirit. (Antaratman). *ibid.*
31. Cross, p. 328
32. Thomas, op. cit., p. 24
33. *ibid.*, p. 26
34. Thomas, op. cit., p. 21 f

35. Thomas, op. cit., p. 26
36. Cross, pp. 26, 209 f
37. *ibid*,
38. Thomas, op. cit. p. 131
39. *ibid.*, p. 132 f
40. *ibid.*, p. 134
41. Thomas, op. cit., p. 134
42. Thomas, op. cit., p. 114
43. Oosthuizen, op. cit., p. 42. He also criticises Chakkarai as "definite predestinationist", *ibid*
44. Cross, pp. 209-211. When one reads the last sentence of this quotation, one wonders how a trade union leader in India could have such a philosophy of life.
45. Avatar, pp. 37 ff, 73 f, 141 ff.
46. Thomas, p. 47
47. *ibid.*, p. 130
48. *ibid.*, p. 44
49. *ibid.*, p. 45
50. Cross, pp. 209 f
51. In this respect M. M. Thomas' writings are a good corrective to Chakkarai
52. Cross, p. 71 f
53. Cross, p. 220

CHAPTER IV

DEVANANDAN'S ANTHROPOLOGY

1. J. Wietzke, *Theologie im Modernen Indien*-Paul David Devanandan, Lang, 1975, p. 27. In this sense, according to Dr. Edgerton, there is no 'pure philosophy' in India. *ibid* p. 19
2. *ibid.*, p. 19
3. For more biographical details cf. P. D. Devanandan, *I will Lift up Mine Eyes unto the Hills* by S. J. Samartha and Nalini Devanandan, Bangalore, 1963, pp. 1-11
4. cf. Mookenthottam, *op. cit.* p. 132
5. cf. Boyd, *ICT*, p. 187
6. cf. Wietzke, *op. cit.*, pp. 251 ff. Quotations from the above mentioned books are marked only by the underlined words.
7. Wietzke, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-250. Boyd considers the following concepts as important in Devanandan's writings viz. maya, personality, creation, community, dialogue and history. cf. Boyd, *ICT*, pp. 188-205
8. *Preparation*, p. 32
9. Wietzke, *op. cit.*, p. 15 f
10. M. M. Thomas. *The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance*, p. 170
11. cf. *Indian Journal of Theology*, January, 1981, p. 9 f
12. *Preparation*, p. 30
13. *ibid.*, p. iii
14. *ibid.*, p. 40
15. *Christian Issues*, p. 136

16. Preparation, pp. 60-79
17. Christian Concern, pp 114 f
18. Preparation, p. 166
19. *ibid.*, p. 39
20. *ibid.*, p. 165 f
21. *ibid*
22. *ibid*
23. *ibid.*, p. 154 f
- 23a. I will Lift up Mine Eyes, p. 69 and p. 100
- 23b. Preparation, p. 154 f
24. *ibid.*, pp. 155 ff
25. Preparation p. 146
26. *ibid.*, p. 38
27. The earliest Vedic account points to man's formation from five elements, (Boodhas viz. water, air, fire, earth, and light. The Bhakti tradition (Puranas) according to its legendary character, narrates how the whole world was created from the navel of Brahma. The Samkhya philosophy expounds how man was born through the contact of Purusha with Prakriti; and of course, the Advaitic tradition rules out any possibility of the real existence of more than one (God) and hence the seeming world is a fiction of Maya)
28. *ibid.*, p. 155 f
29. Devanandan presumably follows not Barth but E. Brunner in his understanding of the concept of *imago Dei*; the phrase stands for a special relationship which implies responsibility.
30. preparation, p. 146. This reminds one the phrase of Luther- 'man *coram Deo*'.
31. *ibid.*, p. 150
32. *ibid.*, p. 150 f
33. *ibid.*, p. 38
34. *ibid.*, p. 40

35. *ibid.*, It may be noted here that the author has come forward with his answers in this dissertation on these 3 fields, cf. Man as Yogi, man as bhakta and man as Karma-yogi.
36. *ibid.*, p. 153
37. *ibid.*, p. 152
38. *ibid.*, pp. 151-156
39. *ibid.*, p. 29
40. Christian Issues, pp' 60 f, 80 88 f, and 135
41. Preparation, p. 34 f
42. Christian Concern, p. 119
43. Preparation, p. 37 f
44. Christian Concern, p. XI
45. The Dravida Kazhagam, p. 30
46. Preparation, p. 149
47. Christian Issues, p. 136 f
48. Preparation, p. 158 ; underlining is mine
49. Christian Concern, p. 118
50. *ibid.*, p. 119 f
51. Preparation, p. 39 f
52. *ibid.*, p. 155
53. *ibid.*
54. *ibid.*, p. 38
55. *ibid.*, p. 38
56. Christian Concern, p. 80
57. Morton, op. cit., p. 16
58. The Indian Journal of Theology, 1957, p. 77
59. Boyd, ICT, p. 187
60. Christian Issues, p. 63
61. Christian Concerns, p. 128 f
62. Preparation p. 173

63. Christian Issues, p. 64
64. Preparation, pp. 173-178
65. Christian Issues, p. 65
66. Preparation, p. 189
67. *ibid.*, p. 170 f
- 67a. *ibid.* p. 39 f
68. *supra*, p.
69. This tendency to consider man as a spiritual being, in need of spiritual food, is unfortunately rampant in Indian situation. Even D. T. Niles does not free himself totally from this tendency. M. M. Thomas, on the other hand, has stressed more of the body of man than his spirit. It must be noted that no theologian denies either the bodily or spiritual aspect in man but they tend to stress one aspect at the cost of the other.
70. Devanandan himself would call this 'transcendent humanism' cf. Morton, op. cit., p. 19
71. Preparation, pp. 146 ff
72. *ibid.*, pp. 146-161
73. *ibid.*, pp. 28-42
74. *ibid.*, p. 38



CHAPTER V

NILES' ANTHROPOLOGY

1. For detailed biography of Niles, cf. C.L. Furtado, The Contribution of Dr. D.T. Niles to the Church Universal and Local, C.L.S., Madras 1978, specially pp. 2-8
2. For a detailed bibliography, cf. Furtado, op. cit. pp. 225-232. Future references to Niles' books are given only with the italicised words
3. p. 6
4. cf. His book: A Testament of Faith
5. Upon the Earth, p. 72
6. *ibid.*, pp. 20, 40, 41, 51
7. Testament, p. 83
8. Bible, p.9f
9. e.g. his interpretation of Jesus' reply to Peter after his confession that Jesus is the Christ, and on Jesus' cry of dereliction, and the sin against the Holy Spirit (Testament. pp. 57, 66, 82)
10. Bible, p. 72f
11. Bible' pp. 44, 46
12. Bible, p. 8
13. That they may have life, p. 43
14. Bible, p. 17f
15. Earth, p. 50
16. Bible, p. 22

17. That they may have life, pp. 18, 19
18. It is interesting to note here that demonology in Hindu-belief is very different from the Christian theology. In Hinduism, there is no one devil that is the cause of all evil in this world. But on the other hand there are many Asuras who fight against gods. But these bad gods are not immortals; they can also die and repent; they are under the rule of Karma and thus can be freed from their evil deeds through penance. Popular Hinduism depicts Yama as the devil; but in fact Yama is not a devil who causes the righteous to fall into sin but a god who executes death in all human beings. He is usually depicted as riding on a buffalo and people fear him not so much for sin but because he comes to take life away from man. So instead of interpreting him as devil, one could say he is a god specially in Hinduism because he releases the soul from its prison-the body.
19. Earth, p. 117
20. *ibid.*, p. 236. What Niles means by divine-human nature is "humanum" to M. M. Thomas. Thomas annexes Christology more with anthropology than with theology while Niles keeps Christology as the link between theology and anthropology. In this sense Niles is more systematic than Thomas.
21. Life, p. 15
22. *ibid.*, p. 50
23. Earth, p. 97 f
24. *ibid.*, p. 69
25. *ibid.*, pp. 61, 62
26. Bible, p. 65
27. Testament, p. 131 f
28. Botschaft, p. 80
29. Earth, p. 44
30. Earth, p. 39
31. Testament, p. 13

32. Bible, p. 10 ; Earth, p. 50
33. That they may have life, p. 22
34. *ibid.*, p. 32
35. Earth, p. 97 f
36. Testament, pp. 125, 129
37. Earth, pp. 130 ff
38. *ibid.*, p. 134
39. Earth, pp. 129 ff
40. Botschaft, p. 47
41. Botschaft, p. 49

It is interesting to note that Niles makes a distinction between human and missionary patterns of life. Though Missionaries also are human beings, Niles does not expect that missionaries should have human 'frustrations' (Earth, p. 158)

To M. M. Thomas the word 'human' may sound to be very high, so high that he can put 'humanisation' on par with salvation. But to Niles man is any human being; but this ordinary man can rise up to higher levels of human existence through proper religious training. To Thomas, God created man good and man degraded himself into inhuman standards; to Niles, man finds himself in a weak state and he is helped by God to attain a strong and better level. Thomas speaks in ideological language, Niles does it in biblical language. The presence and role of God comes out as more important in Niles' view of man than in Thomas' view of man. Niles also makes a distinction between man and woman. He thinks that men adjust or accommodate to varied situations quicker than women, who are more conservative and take longer time to adapt themselves to other situations. (Botschaft, p. 100)

43. Bible, p. 42f
44. That they may have life, p. 47
45. Testament, p. 16
46. That they may have life, p. 24
47. *ibid.*, p. 53
48. *ibid.*, p. 53 f
49. *ibid.*, pp. 48 f
50. Earth, pp. 90-96
51. Testament, p. 29
52. Earth, p. 53
53. Botschaft, p. 41
54. *ibid.*, p. 21f
55. *ibid.*, p. 71

By doing so, Niles disagrees with M. M. Thomas as well as with Chenchiah.
56. *ibid*
57. Earth, p. 50
58. Botschaft, p. 88
59. Earth, p. 123
60. *ibid.*, p. 81
61. That they may have life, p. 77 f
62. Earth, pp. 110-115
63. Bible, p. 35

Astrology

Niles does not consider a treatment of astrology as of little value. He cites two examples of a professor from the west and a Hindu young man. Both had their belief in astrology and Niles accepts that the astrologer could foretell the future through some unscientific but curious powers. Niles says that to them the world is 'causal' and 'pre_determined'.

Niles questions the usefulness of believing in such a world whereas Christ frees man from his bondage.

To Niles, this freedom in Christ - to be chosen by Him and to know that He also acts in this world apart from other human beings is of more value than a belief in a mechanical world. (Earth, p. 53 f, and Bible, p. 22 f) Niles' attitude to astrology shows his boldness to face the realities of the world and maintain belief in Christ in the face of them.

64. Botschaft, p. 49 ff
65. Earth, p. 83
66. That they may have life, p. 83
67. *ibid.*, p. 34
68. Earth, p. 53
69. *ibid.*, p. 68
70. *ibid.*, p. 122
71. Botschaft, p. 95
72. *ibid.*, p. 74
73. Earth, p. 138
74. *ibid.*, p. 137f
75. *ibid.*, p. 56 f
76. *ibid.*, p. 195
77. Botschaft, pp. 89 ff
78. Testament, p. 15
79. Earth, p. 211
80. *ibid.*, p. 87
81. *ibid.*, p. 206
82. *ibid.*, p. 207
83. *ibid.*, p. 217
84. Earth, p. 8
85. *ibid.*, p. 235

86. *ibid.*, p. 101
87. *ibid.*
88. Life, p. 78
89. *ibid.*, p. 262
90. *ibid.*, p. 225
91. Earth, p. 241
92. *ibid.*, p. 242
93. *ibid.*, p. 220
94. Life, p. 80 f
95. *ibid.*, p. 104
96. Earth, p. 245
97. *ibid.*, pp. 209-213
98. *ibid.*, p. 196 f
99. Earth, pp. 192-218
100. *ibid.*, p. 201
101. Botschaft, p. 97
102. Earth p. 236
103. *ibid.*, p. 46
104. Life, p. 86
105. Bible, p. 82
106. Earth, p. 232
107. Bible, p. 40
108. Botschaft, p. 48
109. Earth, p. 46
110. Earth, p. 118 f
111. Botschaft p. 42
112. Earth, 78 f
113. *ibid.*, p. 266
114. Life, p. 94
115. Earth, p. 252

116. Life, p. 93 f
117. E. Kaesemann, Der Ruf der Freiheit, J.C.B. Mohr, Tuebingen 1972, pp. 22 ff
118. Theological Discussions and Confessional Developments in the Churches of Asia and Africa, 1958, p. 65
119. *ibid.*, pp. 66
120. Earth, pp. 225-227
121. Earth, p. 196
122. *ibid.*, p. 114
123. cf. *infra*, p. 59
124. cf. *infra*, p. 70
125. Some Indian theologians question whether such a systematisation is necessary at all, *Supra* p. 100

CHAPTER VI

CHANDRAN'S ANTHROPOLOGY .

1. A Vision for man: Essays in Honour J. R. Chandran, ed. by S. Amirtham, C.L.S., Madras, 1978, pp. 19-25
2. *ibid.*
3. Quotations from this book are translated into English by the author
4. Religion and Society, March, 74, p. 21
5. Ethics, p. 88
6. *ibid.*, p. 85
7. *ibid.*, p. 141
8. *ibid.*, p. 86
9. J.R. Chandran, Development of Christian Theology in India, in dem Evangelium auf der Spur, p. 81 f
10. *ibid.*, p. 80 f; Chenchiah emphasises the 'raw fact of Christ'; Chandran emphasises the 'reality of Christ'.
11. *ibid.*, p. 82
12. cf. Amirtham, A Vision for Man, pp. 29-48
13. Religion and Society, March, 74, p. 34
14. Ethics, p. 139
15. Ethics, p. 138
Charles Corwin argues that missiologists must not only make cultural studies but also studies in the economy of the people to whom the Gospel is to be given. (cf. Missiology, VIII, No. 1, pp. 83-91)
16. Religion and Society, XXIV, 2&3, p. 141

17. Religions and Society, March, 74, p. 32
18. Religion and Society, XXV, 3, p. 71
19. *ibid.*, p. 72
20. *ibid*
21. Ethics, p. 94
22. *ibid.*, p. 90
23. *ibid.*, p. 27, 60
24. *ibid.* pp. 114 f
25. *ibid.*, p. 66
26. *ibid.*, p. 88
27. *ibid.*, p. 163
28. Amirtham, A Vision for Man, p. 35
29. Ethics, p. 93 f
30. Religion and Society, Sept. '78, p. 72
31. Ethics, p. 148 f
32. *ibid.*, p. 149
33. *ibid.*, p. 153
34. *ibid.*, p. 103- 107
35. *ibid.*, p. 111
36. *ibid.*, p. 110
37. Religion and Society XXIV, 2&3, p. 139
38. *ibid*
39. Religion and Society, September 1977, pp. 45-47; 87-88, 69, 104; 57, 106-107
40. *ibid.*, pp. 107, 112
41. Guardian LVII, 10, pp. 77-80
42. Ethics, p. 158
43. Religion and Society, March 74, p. 33
44. Amirtham, A Vision for Man, p. 34
45. *ibid.*, p. 41

46. Guardian, LVII, No. 10, p. 79
47. *ibid*
48. Ethics, p. 90 f
49. Amirtham, A Vision for Man, p. 36
50. Ethics, p. 173
51. *Ibid.*, p. 153 f
52. Ethics, p. 124
53. *ibid.*, p. 130 f
54. *Ibid*
55. Ethics, pp. 130 ff
56. *ibid.*, p. 134 ff
57. *ibid.*, p. 32
58. *ibid.*, p. 97
59. *ibid.*, p. 97 f
60. *ibid.*, pp. 134, 170, 176
61. *ibid.*, p. 179
62. *ibid.*, p. 176
63. B. Walker, Hindu World, II, p. 580
64. *ibid.*, pp. 158-160
65. Religion and Society, March, 1974, p. 27
66. *ibid*
67. *ibid.*, p. 30

CHAPTER VII

THOMAS' ANTHROPOLOGY

1. For detailed biography of Thomas cf. Sunand Sumithra, A Theology of Mission in Indian Context, A Study of Madathilaparampil Mammen Thomas, A Dissertation submitted to the Eberhard-Karls Universitaet in Tuebingen, 1981, Vol. I, pp. 79-91

cf. also Thomas' unpublished manuscript: Faith Seeking and Responsibility. Thomas had told his wife that he would not write his autobiography. S. Sumithra, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 23

2. The above mentioned books are referred to only with the underlined words in the following references. For detailed bibliography of Thomas' works cf. S. Sumithra, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 109-130, also M.M. Thomas, *Europaeische Theologie, Zeitschrift fuer Mission*, V, 1979, pp. 70 f.
3. Man and., p. 143
4. Acknowledged Christ, p. xi f.
5. *infra* p. 137 ff
6. contemporary Ecumenism, pp. 57. ff.
7. Religion and Society, Dec. 78, p. 79

One wonders why Thomas who talks of social structures and building or destroying these structures does not like systematisation; it only helps one to think clearly; it need not be unrealistic; it can also accommodate contextual factors. Thomas is afraid that systematic theology cannot include new development. But have not the theologies of P. Tillich, E. Brunner, H. Thieleke, included new developments?

Has not Barth, spoken meaningfully to the people in his situation just after the world war? In fact the whole impact of his systematic theology was built on the contextual situation. Although systematic Theology is not the only way of expressing Theology, it cannot be considered as detrimental to the forming of a right theology.

8. R. Gierth, *Christian Life and Work at the Pastorate Level and Practical Theology in South India*, C.L.S., Madras, 1977, pp. 198 f., 369 f.
9. *Zeitschrift fuer Mission V*, 1979, p. 72
10. *Contemporary Ecumenism*, p. 309 f
11. *ibid.*, p. 315; *Salvation and Humanisation*, p. 55 f
12. *Contemporary Ecumenism*, p. 296 f.
13. e.g. in *Contemporary Ecumenism*, p. 18 f., and in *Man and*, pp. 38, 41
14. *Man and*, p. 45
15. cf. Thomas, *Christlicher Oekumenismus und Saekularismus in Oekumenische Rundschau* 1979, pp. 172 ff.
16. *Contemporary Ecumenism*, pp. 63-65
17. *ibid.*, p. 33
18. *Man and*, p. 50 f
19. *ibid.*, pp. 53-62
20. *ibid.*, p. 70
21. *Contemporary Ecumenism*, p. 48
22. *Man and*, p. 3
23. *ibid.* p. 10
24. *ibid.*, p. 17
25. *ibid.*, p. 151; cf. also *Acknowledged Christ*, p. 64. In this attempt of finding the meaning of God in all spheres of history, Thomas reminds one of Deutero Isaiah who proclaimed that Jahweh is not only for the Jews but for all nations in the world.

26. Man and., p. 112
27. Acknowledged Christ., p. 145
28. Contemporary Ecumenism., pp. 26 f.
29. *ibid.*, p. 34
30. Man and., p. x
31. *ibid.*, p. 22
32. *ibid.*, p. 23. Such a view can also be understood from a Hindu background where man is, in one sense, his own creator i.e. he is responsible either to make himself reborn in this world or be united with the Brahman, and if reborn, he is the one who shapes his personality because of his previous karma. Only here man is taken as individual, with Thomas collectively.
33. *ibid.*, p. 21
34. *ibid.*, p. 148
35. *ibid.*, p. 148
36. *ibid.*, pp. 21-30
37. *ibid.*, p. 23
38. *ibid.*, p. 26
39. *ibid.*, p. 28
40. *ibid.*, It may be noted here that much of what Thomas writes in his book 'Man and the Universe of Faiths' on the themes of valid anthropological basis for theology and on 'self understanding of man is in agreement with Pannenberg's ideas. Pannenberg opines that in the growing secularistic tendencies of today, the 'self understanding' of man plays an important role. He is also convinced that in this context, an anthropological basis for theology is valid. (The idea of God and Human freedom, pp. 80-98)
41. Man and.....,p. 49-128
42. *ibid.*, p, 121 f.
43. cf. R. Boyd, An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology, pp.311-313; Contemporary Ecumenism, p. 63 f; Salvation and Humanisation, p. 35 f.

44. Religion and Society, Dec. '78, p. 79 f
45. Acknowledged Christ, pp. 193-238
46. Man and., pp. 63-70
47. *ibid.*, p. 29
48. *ibid.*, p. 30
49. *ibid.*, p. 70
50. *ibid.*, p. 30
51. Man and p. 29
52. Contemporary Ecumenism, p. 316
53. *ibid.*, p. 18 f.
54. Man and., p. 149 f
55. Acknowledged Christ, p. 289
56. *ibid.*, p. 289
57. Contemporary Ecumenism, p. 34
58. Man and., p. 9
59. *ibid*
60. Acknowledged Christ, p. 304
61. *ibid.*, p. 286
62. Man and., p. 129 ff.
63. *ibid.* Thomas does not confine himself to one field of knowledge-philosophical or secular or religious; but he includes ideas of 'process', importance of 'body', 'self-identity' of man etc. This is why his anthropology gives the impression of a patch-work.
64. Boyd, loc. cit.
65. Man and., p. 12
66. H.G. Poehlmann, *Abriß der Dogmatik*, Guetersloher Verlagshaus, Gerd Mohn, 1975, pp. 144, 146, 162
67. cf. Thomas' view of Providence in Contemporary Ecumenism p. 53 f. "God uses one evil to correct other evils and brings good out of evil." (*ibid.*, p. 54) cf. also Man and., p. 30
68. Contemporary Ecumenism, p. 32

69. *ibid*
70. Salvation and., p. 55
71. Man and., p. 130
72. *ibid.*, p. 131
73. *ibid*
74. *ibid*
75. Man and., p. 112
76. *ibid.*, p. 20
77. *ibid.*, p. 151
78. *ibid.*, p. 156
79. Religion and Society, Dec. 1978, p. 85
80. Man and., p. 147
81. *ibid.*, p. 157
82. *ibid.*, p. 286, 288
83. Man and., p. 138 f
84. Salvation and., p. 38
85. *ibid*
86. *ibid.*, p. 60
87. Man and., p. 134
88. Man and., p. 134-136
89. *ibid.*, p. 136
90. Acknowledged Christ., p. 301
91. *ibid*
92. Man and., p. 139 f
93. *ibid.*, p. 141
94. *ibid*
95. Salvation and., p. 59
96. *ibid.*, p. 54
97. *ibid*

98. It is the old debate between continuity and discontinuity, between history and eschatology, or between the historical and futuristic realisation of the New Creation in Christ, in new forms. *Salvation and.*, p. 55
99. *Acknowledged Christ.*, p. 80
100. *Salvation and.*, p. 56
101. *ibid*
102. *ibid.*, p. 58
103. *ibid*
104. *Man and.....*, p. 140
105. *ibid.*, pp. 129-157
106. *Man and.*, p. 113
107. *Religion and Society*, Dec. '78
108. *Boyd Khristadvaita*, p. 67
109. *Man and..*, p. XIII
110. *Acknowledged Christ*, p. 300
111. *Man and....*, p. XI
112. *ibid.*, p. XII
113. *Acknowledged Christ*, p. 70
114. For example, in the case of using violence or non-violence, it is surprising that Thomas himself concedes to the use of violence especially in the case of South African guerilla action. (*Religion and Society*, Dec. 78, p. 84) To put the question in another way is to ask: how far could Thomas realise his aim through mutual co-operation with secularists and communists when the concept of man is deeply divided between them, i.e. when one group holds that man is material and spiritual and the other views that he is only material?
115. Mention may be made here of S. Amirtham who has done a lot of spade work in putting theological ideas into practice. Unfortunately Thomas was more involved in the world

ecumenical scene so that he could not devote more time for such practical experiments in India. Ofcourse Thomas had devoted more time and energy in involving himself in practical works in the early part of his life. cf. G.M. John, Youth Christian Council of Action 1938-1954. (This book shows how Thomas was responsible for the division of the YCCA because Thomas leaned more towards violent methods than to traditional 'non-violent' methods in achieving the aim and therefore finally left the YCCA.)

116. cf. *Salvation and*, p. 7 f
117. *Acknowledged Christ*, p. 34
118. *ibid*
119. cf. R. Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology*, p. 30 f
120. *Man*, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1976, p. 58
 Dass der Mensch Gott und Schoepfer seiner selbst ist, klingt zwar groossartig, macht ihn aber mitnichten menschlicher.
 (Mensch., P. 88)
121. What Emil Brunner explains in his book on 'Man in Revolt'
122. C.C. Pang, "Justification, Sanctification and Communication by Luther and how it applies in Asia" in *The Gospel and Asian Traditions*, LWF., Geneva, March 79, p. 66
123. For example, Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, Raimondo Panikkar and Swami Abhishiktananda

CHAPTER VIII

SOME DIRECTIONS TOWARDS AN INDIAN CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY FOR TODAY

1. Os Guinness, *Asche des Abendlandes*, pp. 223, 231
2. Is. 1:11
3. cf. O.V. Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event and the Universality of Christianity in a World of Religious Plurality*, Peter Lang, Bern, 1981, pp. 470-481. In this book, which is his dissertation, Jathanna proposes that Indian Christian theology has to find a new meaning and content for the Indian idea of rebirth; he says that if the decisiveness of the Christ-event and His universality is to be established, then the possibility for a new understanding of the theory of rebirth becomes a positive factor for consideration.
4. P.T. Raju, *The Concept of Man*, pp. 220 ff
5. B. Walker, *The Hindu World*, Vol. I, p. 301
6. H. Grafe, *Hinduismus-Vorlesung*, Institut fuer Praktische Theologie der Universitaet Erlangen-Nuernberg, Abt. Religions und Missionswissenschaft Prof. Dr. Niles-Peter Moritzen, Wintersemester, 1980/81, p. 126
7. The following are some quotations from the R.S.S. leaders:
 "What does conversion mean to me?: a total rejection of everything Indian and taking up everything non-Indian."
 "Make all people Christian if you can. I have no objection. But just let that Christianity be an addition to the whole Indian background and culture."
 "In your proclamation you always set the highest Christian ideals in contrast with the worst Hindu realities. I ask you, 'Is that fair?'" Gurukul Perspective No. 19, July 1980, pp. 5,6

8. P.T. Raju' *op. cit.*, p. 29
9. *ibid.*
10. Boyd, Khristadvaita, p. 30
11. A. Diehl, Periyar E.V. Ramaswami, B. I. Publications, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 51-54
12. cf. Amirtharaj Nelson, A New Day in Madras: A Study of Protestant Churches in Madras, William Carey Library, South Pasadena, 1975, pp. 184 ff.
13. cf. Hoerschelmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 495 f.
14. Guinness' suggestion that much pentecostal spirituality can be called 'Nescafe-Froemmigkeit' is quite correct; it functions more as a kind of 'instant-spirituality'. cf. Guinness, *op. cit.*, p. 304
15. Jn. 17:16
16. Jn. 17:17
17. It is interesting to note that CISRS has published in Religion and Society Vol. 20, 1973 the concept of man in many faiths and philosophies for example, in Old Testament, New Testament, *Islam*, Teilhard de Chardin, etc., but the Hindu anthropology is conspicuous by its absence. None had come forward to analyse the anthropology in Thirukkural or Saiva Siddhanta or Bhagavad Gita in this issue.
 Lohft argues that the central doctrine of reformation viz. justification can be understood only at the background of anthropology (Concordia Theological, Monthly, 44, Jan. 1973)
18. Supra, p. 13
19. Supra, p. 35 f 36 f
20. Supra, p. 100
21. N.P. Moritzen, Das Gespraech - Die Kirche als Missio, Jugenddienst Verlag, Wuppertal, 1966, p. 3 f
22. cf. Swami Bhajananda on "Yoga according to Patanjali" in Prayer and Contemplation - studies in Christian and Hindu spirituality ed. by C.M. Vedakke-Kara, Asirvanam Benedictine Monastery, Bangalore, 1980, p. 159

- 22.a Not only the Hindus, but also the Christian 'sects' in India think in this way. cf. Hoerschelmann, op. cit., p. 419
23. Evangelischer Erwachsenen - Katechismus, Guetersloher Verlagshaus, Gerd Mohn, 1977, pp. 194 ff
24. cf. Aurobindo's idea on integral yoga i.e. a process of integration of matter and spirit-D.S. Sarma, Hinduism through the Ages, Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan, Bombay, 1962, pp. 207 f.
25. It means 'I am Brahman' and 'That art Thou',. B. Walker, op. cit., II, p. 363
- 25.a II. Cor. 7:1- "Since we have the promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God."
26. Supra, p. 28
27. In the history of Christian theology such a view was held by Dio and later by Nestorius. cf. Friedrich Loofs, Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte, Hrsg. Kurt Aland, I. Teil' Max Niemeyer Verlag, Halle-Saale, 1950, p. 222. Such a view is acceptable to the Hindus who hold to the dichotomous view of man. In reality, the Hindus have many creation accounts. cf. S. Chatterjee and D. Datta, An Introduction to Indian Philosophy. Calcutta, 1960, p. 360. However, it must be noted that the Tamil literature Tirukkural has spoken about the importance of both body and soul which should remain in unity as bride and bridegroom cf. A. Frenz and K. Lalithambal, Tirukkural von Tiruvalluvar, (1122, 330) pp. 113, 33
28. Other Sanskrit words like Dhehin or Saririn (life or life giving spirit) or rather the Tamil word Uyir can also be used.
29. Paul Althaus differentiates 'Uroffenbarung' and Heilsoffenbarung' but does not reject either. Paul Gregorios rejects Barth's view that religion stems out of godless man and unbelief. cf. Dialogue with World Religions - Basic approaches and Practical experiences in the Indian Journal of Theology XXIX, 1; Jan. -March '80, p. 2

30. Pannenberg, *Idea of God and Human Freedom*, p. 100
31. *Supra*, p. 106
32. Boyd, *ICT*, pp. 124 ff
33. The Gurukul Theological Research Group of the Tamilnad Christian Council, *A Christian Theological Approach to Hinduism*, p. 13, 18
34. Of course, one could also substitute this term with other terms: P.D. Devanandan may prefer to use the word *Purusha* or *Bhakta* instead of *yogi*. *Supra*, p. 40 f
35. Pannenberg, *The Idea of God and Human Freedom*, p. 82. There is also mention of Kant.
36. *ibid.*,
37. *Indien greift nach uns*, p. 17
38. cf. Luther's view of man as *Fleisch, Geist, lebendige Seele*; he desires that theology, unlike Philosophy or other sciences, should consider man in his 'totality'. (*De Homine*, These 20, 21) in G. Ebeling, *Luther Studien, Band II, Disputatio de Homine*, 1. Teil, J.C.B. Mohr, Tuebingen.
39. The question: Are you saved? (very often asked by independent spiritual groups in India) means: Are you related to God? and do you stand in right relationship with God?
40. cf. Robin Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology*, p. 146 f.
41. *Supra*, p. 28
42. *Supra*, p. 59
43. The author is indebted to the ideas of E. Brunner and P.D. Devanandan in interpreting *Imago Dei* as relationship. cf. Brunner, *Der Mensch im widerspruch*, Berlin, 1937, pp. 92ff; *Supra*, p. 40 f
44. Newbegin, *Sin and Salvation*, p. 16f, Newbegin remarks that he has taken this illustration from D.T. Niles. *ibid.*
45. Boyd, *India and the Latin Captivity of the Church*, p. 68
46. Raju *op. cit.*, p. 23

47. In I Cor. 2: 13, 14 Paul talks of the necessity of man's spiritual nature to understand the gifts of God.
48. *Supra*, pp. 46-48
49. Appasamy, What is Moksha, pp. 165 f
50. cf. Gottfried Noth, 'Jesus Christus das Licht der Welt', Referat zum Generalthema in New Delhi, 1961, Hrsg. von W. A. Visser't Hooft, Evangelischer Missions Verlag, Stuttgart, 1962, p. 480
51. Raju, op. cit., p. 311
52. cf. H. G. Poehlmann: Abriss der Dogmatik, Guetersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1975, pp. 146 ff.
53. *Supra*, p. 86
54. Man in Tamil Literature Today, ed. by T. Packiamuthu, p. 72
55. Thielicke, How the world began, pp. 187-201
56. If one should venture to write an ethics of Sigmund Freud, most of the ethical problems will have to be traced back to man's sex instinct. In anticipation of this, the ancient Tamil culture has given much importance to sex life and its ethics. Cf. Ahilan, relation between man and society in 'Man in Tamil Literature Today' ed. by T. Packiamuthu, C.L.S., Madras, 1972, pp. 22-34
57. Gerhard Ebeling gives two more sources to it as follows: "Wa: Also der Mensch in diesem Leben eine lautere Materie Gottes Zur Gestalt in jenem kuenftigen Leben. St: Daher verhaelt sich der Mensch dieses irdischen Lebens fuer Gott wie dei 'Reine Materie' gegenueber dem Leben seiner Zukuenftigen 'Form'." (Gerhard Ebeling, Luther Studien, Band II, Disputatio de Homine, p. 23)
58. Bonhoeffer, Widerstand und Ergebung, p. 74
59. *Supra*, p. 27
60. O. Hallesby, Vom Beten, Brockhaus Verlag, 1966, p. 5 f
61. cf. Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship, p. 140 f

62. E. Kaesemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes*, SCM Press, London, 1964, p. 62
63. *The Book of Concord*, *op. cit.*, p. 345
64. B. Tiliander, *Christian and Hindu Terminology: A Study in their mutual Relations with Special Reference to the Tamil Area*, Uppsala, Almqvist and Wiksell, 1974
65. *ibid.*, pp. 55, 166 f
66. I. Puthiadam, *Geist der Wahrheit, Butzen und Bercker*, Kevelaer, 1980, pp. 14, 18
67. Tiliander, *op. cit.*, p. 168
68. *ibid.*, p. 169
69. *ibid.*, p. 168
70. cf. A. Camps, *Die Notwendigkeit des Dialoges in der Mission*, in *Fides pro Mundi Vita*, p. 170
71. George Samuel, 'Evaluation of Mission and Evangelisation in India today' in *NCCR*, Febr. 77, p. 86
72. Group Discussion, *Religion and Society* XXV, 3. Sept. 78, p. 81
- 72a. *Das Gespraech*, *op. cit.*, p. 8
73. D.A. Thangasamy, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-233
74. K. Klostermeier, *Kristvidya*, p. 40 f
75. Whiteman, "Some Relevant Anthropological Concepts for Effective Cross-Cultural Ministry" in *Missiology*, April, 1981, p. 233 f
76. e.g. "Wenn ich and dich denke, erscheine mir....."
77. The author cannot prove this statement: it is stated only from his general knowledge of the Bible; there is, yet, no Tamil Bible Concordance. Devanandan introduces the word 'dharma' in his translation of Mt. 5:20. cf. Witzke *op., cit.*, p. 28

78. It is not necessary, here, to explain the influences which the the non-theological philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Buber, Sartre and Whitehead have made on Christian theology
79. cf. R.C. Zaehner, *Hinduism*, p. 127
80. *Supra* p. 47 f
81. cf. *Views of RSS leaders*, *Infra*, p. 265 foot-note 7
82. *Christlicher Oekumenismus und Saekularoekumenismus in Oekumenische Rundschau* 1979, Vol. 28, pp. 172-178
83. *Supra* p. 16
84. *Supra* p.-84, 86
85. Nelson's use of word anthropology has undertones of the concept of ethnology. Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 273
86. The Relevance of the theology of the Augsburg confession to the Indian context: An Ecumenical church Perspective'' in the Augsburg confession and Ecumenism in India ed. by H. Hoeffler, Gurukul Theological College and Research Institute, Madras, 1980, pp. 23-34
87. *Das Gespraech*, *op. cit.*, p. 7
88. Towards an Indian Christian Spirituality'' in *Prayer and Contemplation*, *op. cit.*, p. 383
89. *ibid*, p. 387
90. *Supra*, p. 86 Usually homiletics and ethics do not get importance in a study of anthropology. But they are important for the concept of man. Therefore, this thesis tries to deal with these aspects too
91. cf. Appasamy, *The Christian Task in Independent India*, p. 4
92. Gurukul, p. 9 It is interesting to read Vivekananda's view of 'sin' in Indian context. His anthropology is to be found in his book: *Jnana- Yoga*, Rascher Verlag, Zuerich, 1949, Vol. II, pp. 59-79
93. Eva Olsson, *The Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo in the light of of the Gospel*, CLS, Madras, 1959, p. 34

94. S. Radhakrishnan, *The Bhagavadgita*, George Allen Unwin, London, 1956, p. 146
95. *Man in Tamil Literature Today*, op. cit., p. 25 f
96. *Augsburg Confession*, 28: 4 in the *Book of Concord*, ed. by Tappert, op. cit., p. 81
97. *Augsburg Confession*, op. cit., 28, 11
98. *Augsburg Confession*, op. cit., 81, 2
99. *The Newspaper*, *Erlanger Nachrichten* 17./18. Oktober 1981, page 3
100. For example, Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918) cf. R. T. Handy on 'Social Gospel Movement' in *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*, ed. by A. Richardson, SCM Press, London, 1969, p. 313 f
101. One can understand Pannenberg and Beyerhaus in this background in their controversy with M.M. Thomas: God never becomes a politician and takes side with one or the other political party but God understands and helps man in his life of reconciliation. W. Pannenberg, *Die Hoffnung der Christen und die Einheit der Kirche* in *OR*, 1978, p. 477 and M.M. Thomas, *Salvation and Humanisation*, p. 6 f
102. cf. W. Hoerschelmann, op. cit., pp. 318-381
103. XVI, 6, 7
104. *Supra*, p. 88 and his book on *Christian Ethics*, pp. 110 ff
105. *Supra*, p. 45
106. *Supra*, p. 106
107. The word *Bhakti* implies, etymologically, one's total surrender. One's helplessness in salvation is clearly discernible from the songs of the Tamil *Bhakti* poets called *Alvars* and *Nayanmars*. They were poets belonging to *Vishnu* and *Siva* traditions respectively. cf. *Boyd' Indian Christian Theology*, pp. 110-118

108. cf. D. W. Jesudoss, A study of Luther's Concept of the Bondage of the will and its relevance for the interpretation of man in India today.
Unpublished Thesis for the degree of Master of Theology submitted to the U. T. College, Bangalore, 1972.
109. Chakkarai, *Supra* p. 27
110. cf. K. E. Logstrup, 'Wille', *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Tuebingen, 1962, Vol. VI, col. 1717.
111. R. Panikkar, *The Trinity and World Religions*, C.L.S., Madras, 1970, pp. 9-39, 71-75 and cf. R. Boyd, *ICT*, pp. 297-302.
112. However, one could compare Jesus Christ to the sarira aspect, Holy spirit to jiva aspect and God to the Purusha aspect.
113. cf. B. A. Gerrish, "To the unknown God": Luther and Calvin on the Hiddenness of God, *The Journal of Religion*, 53. Chicago, 1973, pp. 263-292, p. 268.
114. Swami Vivekananda, *Jnana-Yoga*, Rascher Verlag, Zuerich, 1949, pp. 64-79.
115. H. G. Poehlmann, *Abriss der Dogmatik*, Guetersloher Verlagsgaus, Gerd Mohn, 1975, p. 97.
116. Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, p. 31 f
117. cf. *Letters and Papers from Prison*, p. 110, E. Bethge, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, pp. 958, 972 ff
118. *ibid*, p. 109
119. *The Cost of Discipleship*, pp. 157 ff
120. *Supra*, p. 153 f
121. Bonhoeffer, *Letters and papers from prison*, p. 122
122. cf. Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, pp. 134-148. Quoting Radhakrishnan, Mahadevan writes: "to be secular is not to be religiously illiterate, it is to be deeply spiritual

and not narrowly religious". T.M.P. Mahadevan, 'Study of Religion in Indian Universities, A Report of the Consultation held in Bangalore in Sept. 1967, Bangalore, Press, Bangalore, p. 50

123. The Greek philosophers taught that man should know what he is through the phrase 'Gnothi seauton'
124. Wilhelm Druhe has written a good article on "Teestube ja-Abendamahl nein? - Warum viele Christen in die Zwischenkirche' fluechten" in 'Die Zeit, Nr. 43, 16-10-1981, p. 51
125. cf. Devanandan
126. Pannenberg, What is Man? Chapter I
127. The first protestant missionary to India, Ziegenbalg, had found 'a small light' among the heathen already in 1710. cf. E.A. Lehmann, It began at Tranquebar, C.L.S., Madras, 1956, p. 31 f.
128. This view of the Archbishop was obtained when the author had an interview with him on 21st July 1981. Stephen Neill writes that G. U. Pope had already talked of Christian influences on Thiruvalluvar in his book 'The Thirukkural' p. XVIII. cf. S. Neill, The Story of the Christian Church in India and Pakistan, CLS-SPCK, Madras, 1972, p. 27
129. cf. C. Duraisingh, Local village Theology in Arunodayam, Tranquebar Printing and Publishing House, Madras, Nov. 1980, pp. 247-249
130. cf. A. J. Appasamy, The Christian Task in Independent India, p. 4
131. Moritzen, Das Gespræch, op. cit. p. 8
132. M.M. Thomas accepts that Bonhoeffer's ideas of agape i.e. interpreting Christ as the 'Man for others' and his 'secular' interpretation of the gospel will gain importance in the future cf. The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance, pp. 300, 306
133. Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, pp. 91f, 122
134. *ibid.*, pp. 40, 44

135. Bonhoeffer, Letters and paper from Prison, p. 122, cf. A Sermon of D.W. Jesudoss on 6—7—1975 in T.T.S. where he said, "Don't talk of God, forgetting the world; but talk of the world, remembering God." T.T.S., Sermons in Tamil, T.T.S.' Y.M.C.A., Printing Press, Madurai, p. 38.
136. W. Pannenberg, What is man?, pp. 12 f 141 f.
137. Widerstand und Ergebung, p. 307

Explanation of Indian terms

- 1) *Supra*, p. 180 f
- 2) B. Tiliander, op. cit., p. 216
- 3) cf. Tiliander, *ibid.*
- 4) *ibid.*, p. 223 f
- 5) cf. Tiliander, op. cit., p. 63
- 6) Tiliander, op. cit., p. 216
- 7) *ibid.*, p. 220
- 8) D. Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from the prison, p. 121

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The following points are to be noted before reading the bibliography,

1. Since this study aims, not a depth level study but a comprehensive one and since a full bibliography is already available for atleast six of the seven theologians through dissertations, a repetition or the full bibliography has been avoided ; instead the sources where such bibliographic material is available have been given.
2. Additions and corrections are noted when necessary.
3. Since a thematic handling on anthropology of the seven theologians has not yet been done and the seven authors themselves have expressed their views sporadically in almost all their books and articles, it has been found necessary to go through their writings and the most important sources for their views on man have been separated and they are to be found at the beginning of each chapter under the title ' Life and Work '. The important articles are to be found in the reference in foot-notes.
4. For J. R. Chandran, on whom no one has yet made a dissertation, the bibliography published in his ' Festschrift ' book has been cited.
5. However, a full bibliography of books that had been printed on and about the seven theologians are given under Part II. Secondary Sources.
6. Finally, a bibliography of the books used by the author in addition to the above mentioned books to prepare his own anthropology is given under Part III : Additional Sources for the Author's Anthropology.

PART I : PRIMARY SOURCES

1. A. J. APPASAMY

cf. H. Wagner, *Erstgestalten einer einheimischen Theologie in Suedindien*, Kaiser Verlag, Muechen, 1963, p. 296.

cf. R. Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*, C.L.S., Madras, 1975, p. 343.

Boyd mentions an unpublished work of Appasamy : 'What are Pramanas?' But in the meantime this book is published as : 'What shall we believe?' A study of Christian Pramanas,' C.L.S.-S.P.C.K.-L.P.H., Bangalore, 1971.

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2. CHENCHIAH

cf. H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-298.

cf. R. Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. 344

cf. O. V. Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event and the Universality of Christianity in a World of Religious Plurality*, Peter Lang, Bern, 1981, pp. 543-548.

3. CHAKKARAI

cf. H. Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 298 f

cf. R. Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. 343 f

4. DEVANANDAN

cf. J. Wietzke, *Theologie im modernen Indien*-Paul David Devanandan, Lang, Frankfurt, 1975, pp. 251-262

5. D. T. NILES

cf. C. L. Furtado, *The Contribution of Dr. D. T. Niles to the Church Universal and Local*, C.L.S., Madras, 1978, pp. 225-230

6. J. R. CHANDRAN

cf. *A Vision for Man : Essay in Honour of Joshua Russel Chandran*, ed. by Samuel Amirtham, C.L.S., Madras, 1978, pp. 19-25

7. M. M. THOMAS

cf. S. Sumithra, *A Theology of Mission in Indian Context : A Study of Madathilaparampil Mammen Thomas*, Dissertation submitted to the Eberhad-Karls-Universitaet, Tuebingen, 1981, Vol. II, pp. 109-130

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